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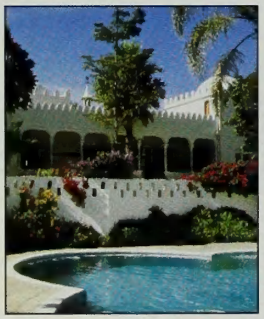


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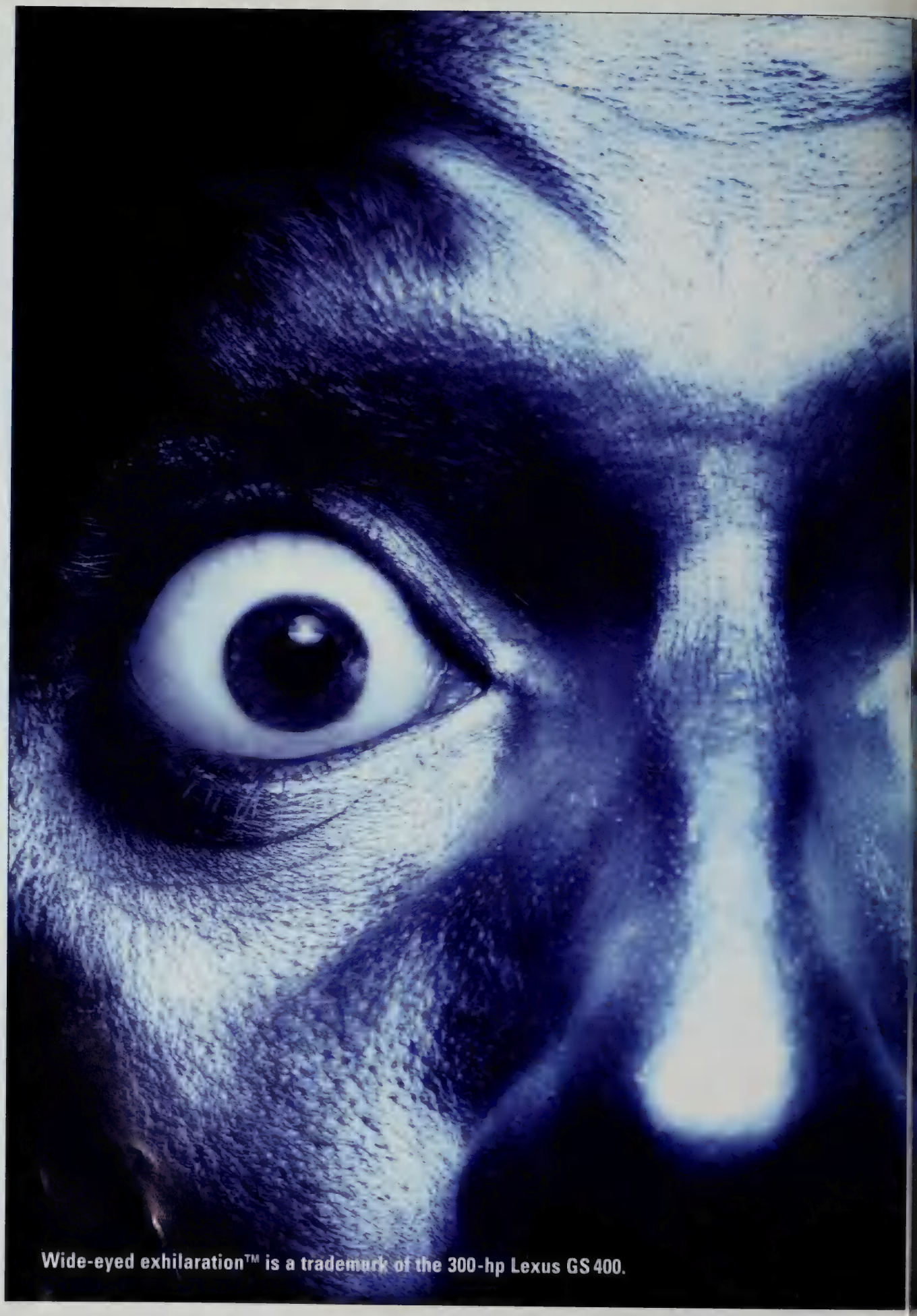
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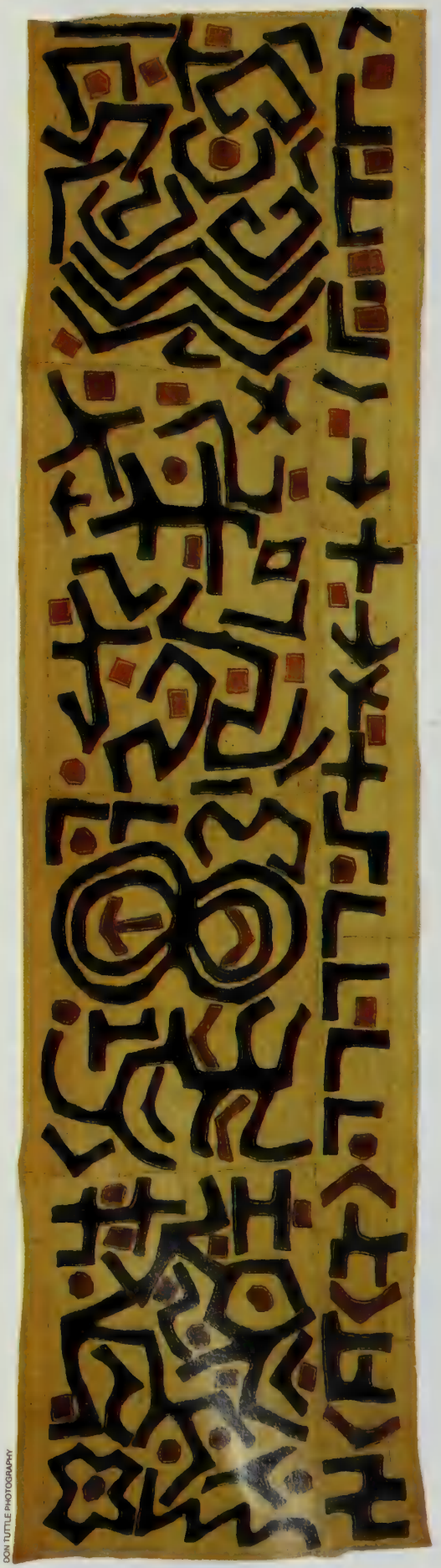

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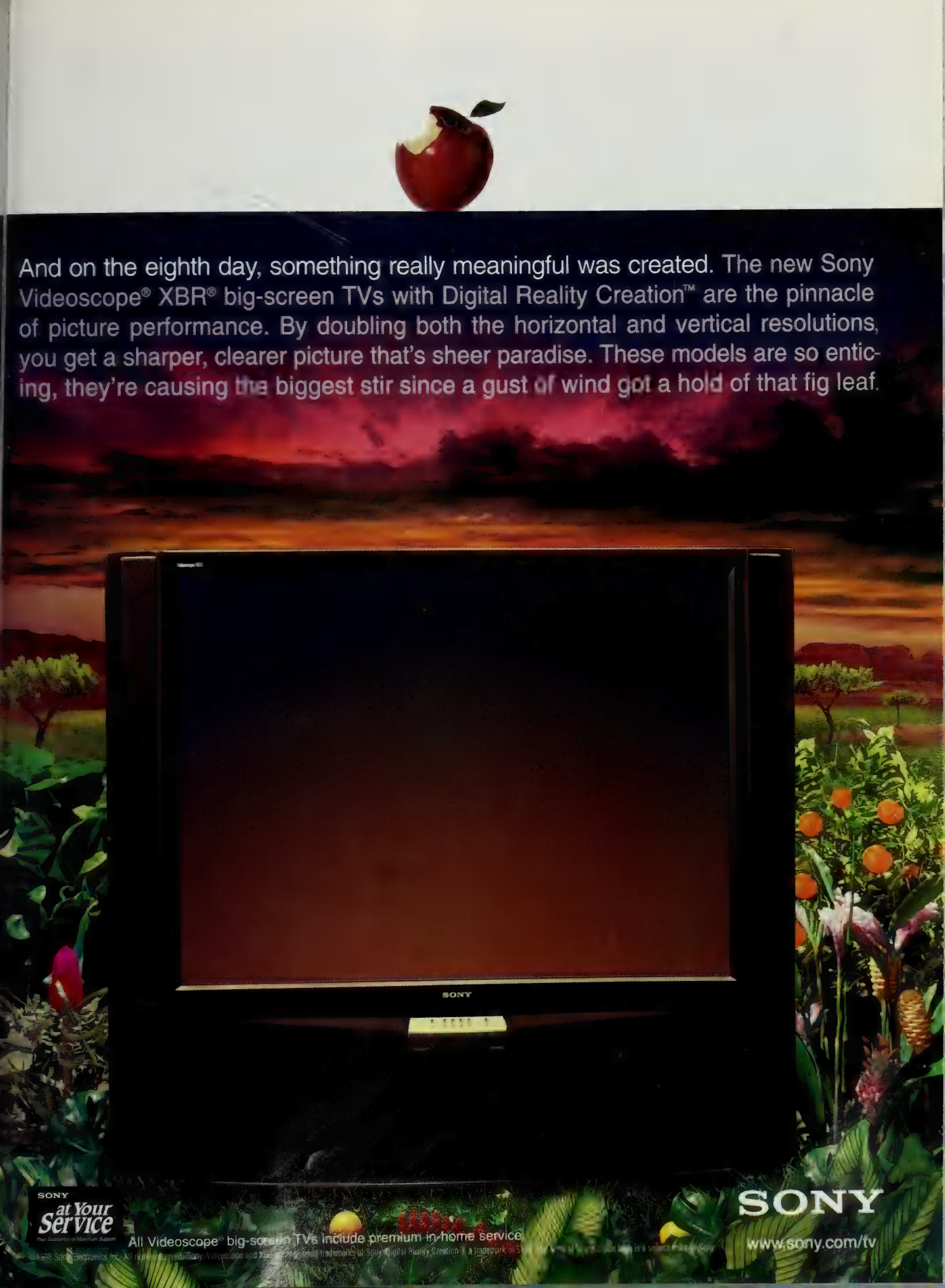
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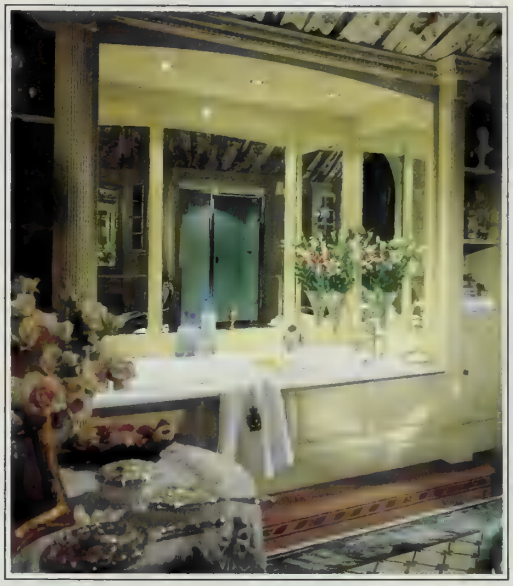
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"I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED THE PIECE ON JED JOHNSON'S VISION IN NEW YORK."

I just finished my copy of your September 1998 issue. Simply put, it is one of the best ever. The window treatments and use of color in Nancy Prentice's house in the English countryside and in Susan Zises Green's Nantucket cottage are fabulous. Green's house wins the award in my book for the most cozy home I have ever seen.
KIMBERLY HOOD
AUSTIN, TEXAS

In the September issue, featuring interior designers' own homes, I think you saved the best for last. Susan Zises Green's cottage and Didier Rabes's French château were outstanding in their innovative and personalized creativity. I thought they were wonderful!
HELENE COUTURE-LOUGHRAN
REDLANDS, CALIFORNIA

I thoroughly enjoyed the sentimental piece on Jed Johnson's vision in New York (September 1998). The story was particularly meaningful and inspiring. I share the philosophy that craftsmanship matters in design—no matter how trivial it may appear to the client. This and the connection between art and artifice continue to be beautifully expressed by Alan Wanzenberg.
MATTHEW G. DILLHOEFER
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

You have truly given me an education. *Architectural Digest* has trained me to notice quality decorating and design and provided me with a working knowledge of periods and styles. I can now distinguish my favorite designers, such as Mimi London and Diane Burn, when you show new work by them.
LILA MARIE TURNER
ST. JOSEPH, MICHIGAN

I was appalled at the piece on Cambodian antiquities in "Collecting Antiques" (September 1998). Collecting Cambodian artifacts is fraught with political and ethical problems. Many sites in recent years have been pillaged by smugglers and looters. This is also true of many other sites throughout Asia. Unfortunately, it's only going to get worse as economic troubles in these areas continue.
DAVID FEARS
LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

In September's "Focus on Color" (page 96), it is stated that "a nineteenth-century Shingle Style house...belonged to George Armstrong Custer's daughter." Custer had no children.
MARY LOU SCHWARTZ
GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

I was pleased to see my painting so prominently visible on the October 1998 cover. The painting, which was not identified, is called *Gifts of Silence*. My work is currently available through the Forum Gallery in New York, which is where this piece was purchased.
ALAN FELTUS
ASSISI, ITALY

I was born in Colima, Mexico, so you can imagine my surprise when I saw "Mexico's Hacienda de San Antonio" in your October issue. Thank you for sharing with the world this beautiful estate located in my birthplace. What gorgeous photography—the magical Volcán de Fuego appears to be practically in the backyard. I also love the native arts and crafts used in decorating the hacienda. Please include more of Mexico's houses in your future issues.
JOVITA RAMIREZ
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After thirty-five years of reading *Architectural Digest*, I must write to tell you how I feel about the magazine. Reading it is almost a spiritual experience for me. It is always beautifully presented and contains excellent designs from which the reader can draw.
BETTE ANDREWS NOBLE
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KENNETH NOLAND

Next month, in our eighth Before and After issue, we look behind the scenes as some of the world's top designers and architects work their magic. Mario Buatta transforms a drab Fifth Avenue apartment into a graceful English-style interior filled with color and light. Mica Ertegun teams up with Shope Reno Wharton architects to rescue a house ravaged by fire. Richard Keith Langham reworks an East Hampton retreat originally designed by Elsie de Wolfe. Victoria Hagan imbues traditional rooms in Westchester County, New York, with fresh ideas. In addition, former Tiffany design director John Loring reconfigures his Manhattan town house, and Lord Palumbo unveils the recently restored Farnsworth House in Illinois, the Mies van der Rohe masterpiece that was severely damaged by floods in 1996 and 1997. Each project has been documented in its initial stages, and the final results offer eloquent testimony to the redeeming power of design. The February issue also features Paul Goldberger writing about the newly remodeled Volvo, Nicholas von Hoffman reporting on the latest technology for the home, and David Easton shopping for art and antiques in Stockholm.

Paige Rense
Editor-in-Chief

Tim Beddow is a London-based writer and photographer who specializes in interiors and travel. His book *Safari Style* was published in October by Stewart, Tabori & Chang.


ROB LANG

Hunter Drohojowska Philp, who writes about art and design, is working on a biography of Georgia O'Keeffe, to be published by Knopf.

Christopher Finch's books include *19th-Century Watercolours* and *The Art of Walt Disney*. He recently completed *Sotheby's Guide to Animation Art* for Owl Books.


BRUCE KATZ

Roland Flamini, a writer based in Washington, D.C., is the author of *Thalberg: The Last Tycoon and the World of MGM*. He is writing a biography of French diplomat Edmond Genet.

Jonathan Kandell has written two books about Latin America, *Passage Through El Dorado* and *La Capital: The Biography of Mexico City*.

Elizabeth Lambert is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer who lives in London.


CHRISTOPHER LITTLE

Carol Lutfy, a 1998–99 National Arts Journalism Program Fellow at Columbia University, has written for *Time* and *The New York Times Magazine*.

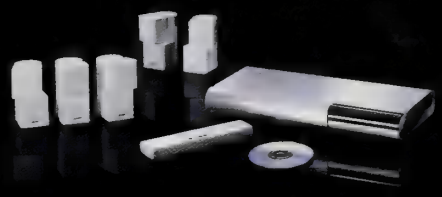
Aileen Mehle is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer and the author of the "Suzy" column for *W* and *Women's Wear Daily*.

Prince Michael of Greece is the author of *The Crown Jewels of Europe*, *Imperial Palaces of Russia*, *Nicholas and Alexandra: The Family Albums* and *La Bouboulina. Living with Ghosts* is his latest book.

Mildred F. Schmertz, an architect and journalist, is a former editor-in-chief of *Architectural Record*.

Nicholas Shrady lives in Barcelona and writes for several publications. His book *Sacred Roads: Adventures from the Pilgrimage Trail* will be published in 1999 by HarperCollins.

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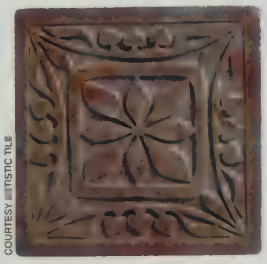
Geoffrey Bradfield in the portico of the Hammamet Antique Center

TUNISIAN PALETTE

The African continent is my motherland, and I love North African things," **Geoffrey Bradfield** says of a recent trip to Tunisia, where he visited rug dealer **Samir Giarbi**. "I've shopped for kilims in Morocco, Turkey and all over the world, but in Hammamet the colors—the ochers, siennas and a shade of hot pink—are more representative of the North African coast," he notes, adding, "Although the kilims have age to them, they retain their brilliance; their colors are quite fast." Giarbi, who's been selling Tunisian handicrafts for 23 years, specializes in kilims woven by bedouins in the first quarter of the century. He also repairs rugs and looms new kilims. Samir Giarbi, Hammamet Antique Center, Habib Bourguiba, 8050 Hammamet, Tunisia; 216-2-283-774.

TILE TABLEAUX

Artistic Tile has a lot of things we haven't seen before," says Sarah Chapin, an associate of New York designer **Mariette Himes Gomez**'s. With a new flagship showroom on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, which has drawn designers such as **Clodagh** and **Adam Tihany**, the company shows diverse flooring, including tiles made from hand-etched Italian marble, California clay tiles hand-pressed into molds with piecrust edges, rusticated rough stone hewn in Israel and semiprecious stones laid into a marquetry design. Gomez, who chose recycled-glass tiles embossed with circles for a border, says, "They have an architectural feeling and allowed us to do something fresh." Artistic Tile, 79 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10003, 212/727-9331; 727 Rte. 17 South, Paramus, NJ 07652, 201/670-6100; 65 Tarrytown Rd., White Plains, NY 10607, 914/422-0041.



COURTESY ARTISTIC TILE

Jerusalem stone, left, at Artistic Tile in New York

The Akros series of hand-etched marble tiles, right



COURTESY ARTISTIC TILE



COURTESY ARTISTIC TILE



COURTESY ARTISTIC TILE

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MUGHAL STYLE IN L.A.

The maharajas ordered so much crystal that Baccarat had to open an office in Calcutta," says Sandra Müller, who visits India regularly, bringing back unusual pieces for clients such as **Juan Pablo Molyneux**, **Frederic Jochem** and **Muriel Brandolini**. Müller, who recently opened **Lila Interior Designs and Antiques** in Los Angeles, especially likes the 19th-century Bohemian chandeliers that were commissioned by the Indian elite. Many chandeliers, she explains, were 30 feet high and 13 feet wide, and some palaces featured crystal fountains, thrones and beds.

Müller also tracks down Mughal and dhurrie rugs. The cotton dhurries she collects have elaborate designs that often depict an event. "I'm interested in a piece as long as there is a story behind it," she says. Müller has acquired



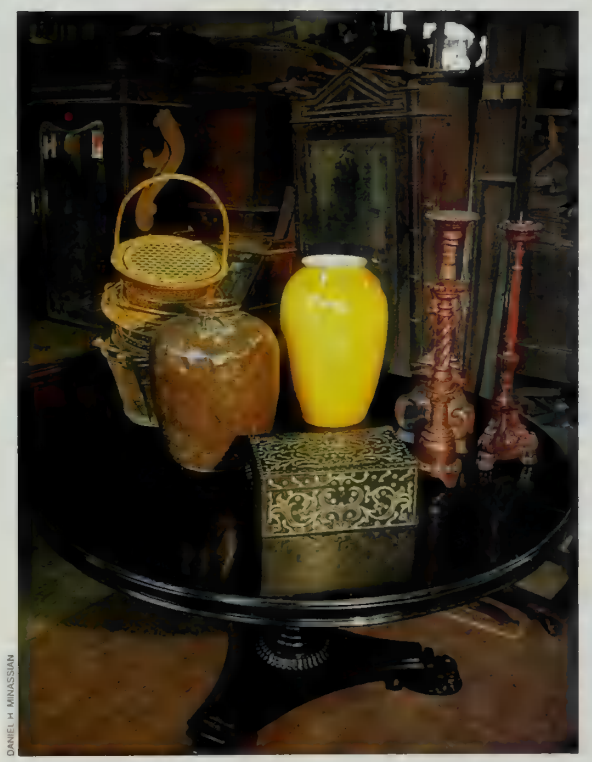
ANTHONY CUNHA



ANTHONY CUNHA

A dhurrie, left, and a maharaja's chandelier at Lila Interior Designs

several antique costumes as well, such as a silver-embroidered coat that she had framed. "Many things are still with families," she says. "You have to build a relationship with people, and eventually they might open their homes—and closets." Lila Interior Designs and Antiques, 619 Ridgeley Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90036; 323/931-5937.



DANIEL H. MINASSIAN

AN INDIAN FAVORITE

I filled one house and then another, and when it seemed we might need a third, my husband suggested I might as well go into business," recalls Bombay-area antiques supplier **Farida Hoosenally** (right). That was ten years ago, and it was not long after that **Genevieve Weaver** discovered her as a top source for Anglo-Indian furniture. Weaver, who owns London's Guinevere Antiques and goes on buying trips to India, says of Hoosenally, "She's more innovative than the other dealers. Her antiques are better selected, and she has more of a sense of decoration." Over the years Weaver has bought colonial beds, large tables and ebony chairs. "I'm interested in things with a European flavor.



DANIEL H. MINASSIAN

I don't go for the very Indian look," she explains. Hoosenally's business occupies 20,000 square feet on three floors that are piled with antiques (left). She leaves them in their original condition, but she has a staff of 45 restorers, who also reproduce furniture. Farida Hoosenally, Hallay Pacific Private Ltd., 522 Sayani Rd., Prabhadevi, Mumbai 400 025, India; 91-22-436-1212.

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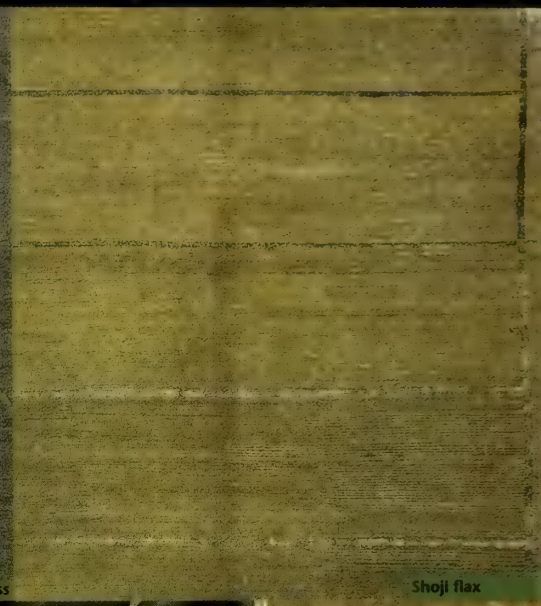
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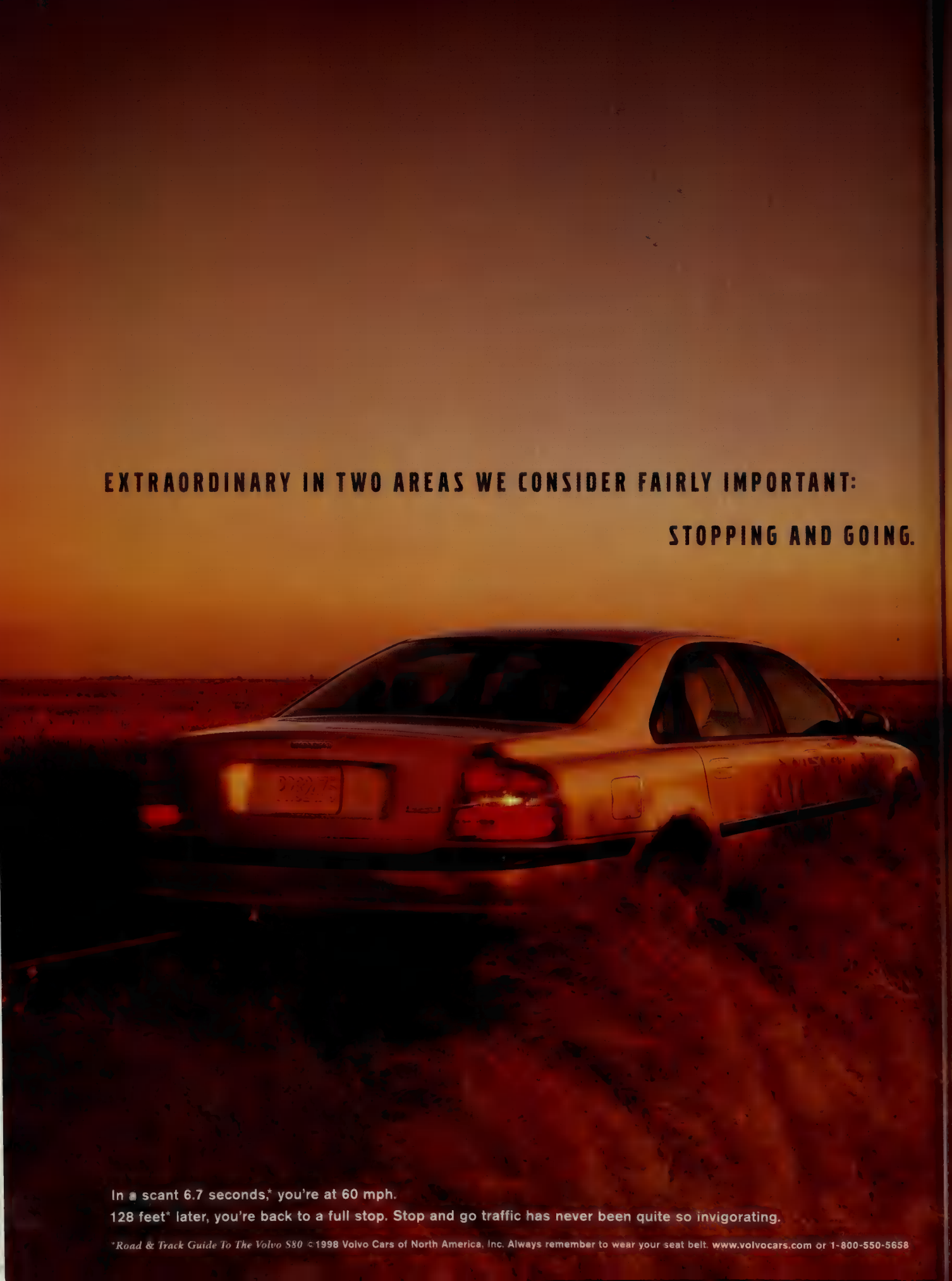
Fauxbois clove



Ragweave meadow

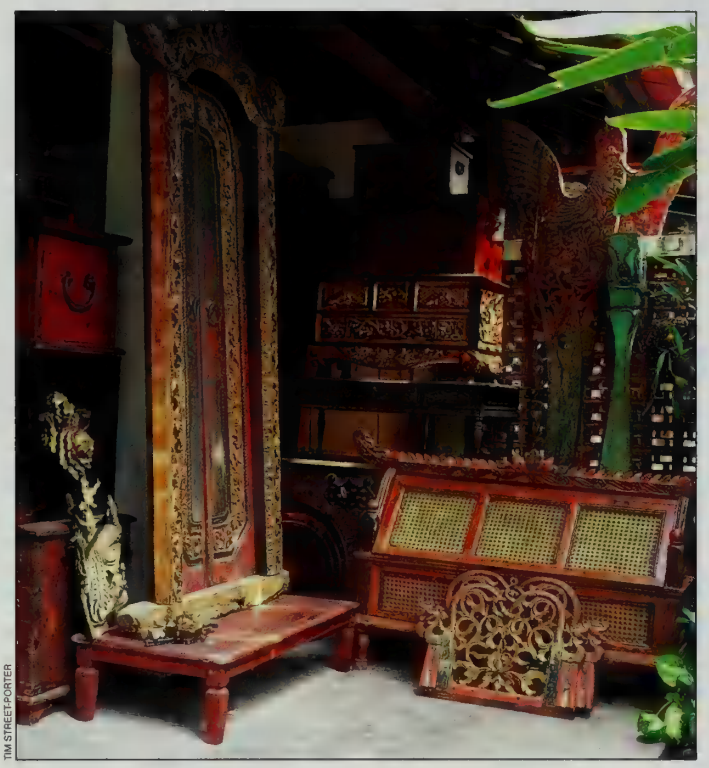


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UNUSUAL FINDS IN JAKARTA

Jaya Ibrahim likes to call on Wieneke de Groot at **Nilam Gallery** in Jakarta for antique furniture and old and new textiles. "Even though Wieneke understands the Indonesian nuances and speaks Javanese like a local, what she presents reflects a European point of view," says the London-educated Ibrahim. De Groot, whose Dutch family has had ties to Indonesia for several decades, opened Nilam with Indonesian partners more than 20 years ago, indulging her passion for furniture from that region. "Javanese furniture typically is produced in twos, with one piece slightly larger than the other, and I try to get them both," says de Groot, who might have a pair of early-19th-century caned Batavian chairs (Batavia is the old name for Jakarta), armoires, architectural elements, such as doors, and chests (above). Nilam Gallery, Jalan Pekalongan 16, Jakarta 10310; 62-21-315-0480.

NEW DESIGNS FROM BALI

For 15 years partners Eric Manier and Gail Holman have used uncommon materials for their line of Asian- and tropics-inspired furniture. "With coconut, we use absolutely everything—bark, shells and stems," says Holman, "and we could even eat the rest." Many of the pieces can be seen in luxury resorts such as the San Ysidro Ranch (*AD*, June 1997), as well as in projects by designers, including **Craig Wright**. Holman and Manier recently opened a West Hollywood showroom called **A Natural Thing**. "We started with bamboo and rattan, but now we also use solid teak with ebony inlay and hand-woven leather," says Holman. Everything is made from indigenous materials in Indonesia, where Manier lives. Coconut shells and stems are arranged, then set in acrylic, creating a mosaic-like surface that can be used for tabletops, screens and mirror frames. "For large pieces, like the canopy bed, we fill the bamboo to make it solid so it doesn't shake," says Holman. Crackle, gold leaf and a variety of other finishes are available, but Holman says most clients prefer a natural look. A Natural Thing, 8475 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood, CA 90069; 323/653-4885.



CHRISTOPHER DOW

A screen of tree bark, above, and a table of inlaid coconut shell at A Natural Thing



CHRISTOPHER DOW



JONATHAN PILKINGTON

A BEATON LEGACY

In the 1950s Cecil Beaton often visited his friend David Herbert, the British aristocrat, in Tangier. Ever the designer, Beaton went to an ironworker in the souk one day and returned with a gift for his host—a white chair he'd had made in the form of a swan. The chair so intrigued interior designer **Sandra Shober** during a recent stay at Herbert's house that she had it copied in white and in black (left). Made in England, it's available through **Nina Campbell** and the Wadham Trading Company. Nina Campbell, 9 Walton St., London SW3 2JD, 44-171-225-1105; Wadham Trading Company, Wadham House, Southrop, Gloucestershire GL7 3PB, 44-1367-850-499. □

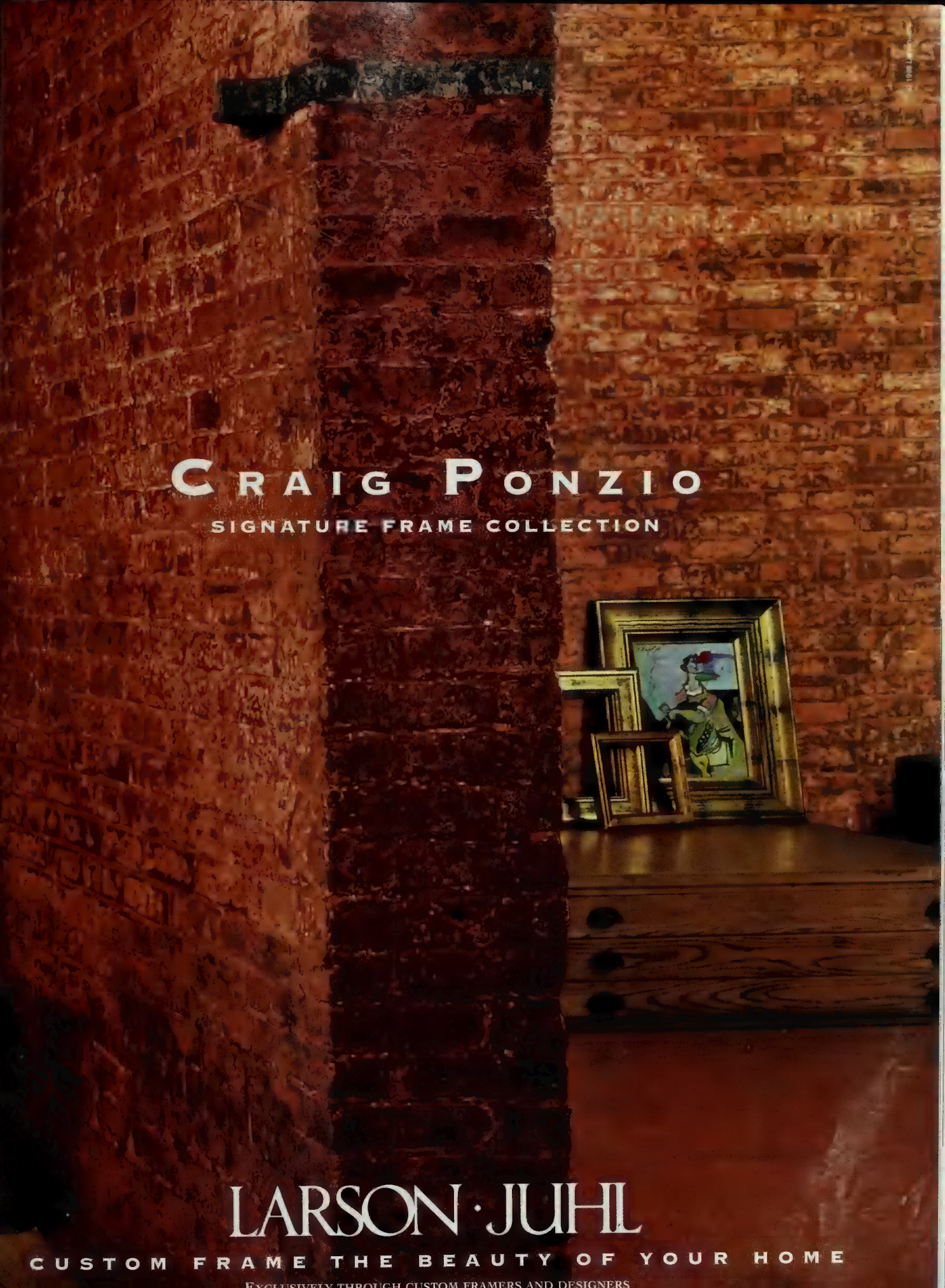


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THE BEST OF BANGKOK

CAMPION PLATT'S GUIDE TO THAILAND TREASURES

Text by Jonathan Kandell
Photography by Robert McLeod



"Bangkok is *the* city for Southeast Asian art," says Campion A. Platt. LEFT: A vendor sells incense and wreaths for offerings at the Grand Palace compound.

BEFORE HIS FIRST ENcounter with Bangkok, Campion A. Platt had heard enough about Thailand's capital to convince him it was suitable only as a place to make connecting flights to more appealing Asian destinations. The city evoked images of paralyzing traffic, tawdry nightlife and explosive population growth.

So when Platt, a New York–based architect and interior designer, made initial contact a decade ago with this reputed tropical Gomorrah, he was pleasantly startled by his own impressions: temple compounds of quiet beauty; food that pampered the eyes as well as the palate; and a picturesque river-and-canal system that served up intimate glimpses of ordinary Thais at work and home. He was drawn by their serenity in the midst of urban chaos. "In New York there's a great deal of angst," says Platt. "Everybody is on the edge, running around nervously all the time. In Bangkok there are streets clogged with cars and terrible flooding in the monsoon season, but people aren't anxious or angry."

Already seduced by Bangkok's atmosphere, he plunged into its treasure trove of antiques, furniture and accessories. Hong Kong might still be the ultimate emporium for Chinese objects of art and decoration. But for Southeast Asian pieces, no other city compares to Bangkok in variety, abundance, quality and prices.

Ironically, it turns out that Platt was right to think the Thai capital would become an unavoidable stopover on the way to other Asian destinations: No matter how much he likes Bali or Phuket or Angkor Wat, he wouldn't think of traveling to any of those places without first spending a few days shopping in Bangkok. He has returned there a dozen times, scouting out or purchasing objects for himself and clients

continued on page 36



RIGHT: "Arisra Gallery carries the finest sculptures of Buddha," says Platt, who examines a Burmese bronze statue with owner Arisra Chinprayoon.



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RIGHT: River City mall, on the banks of the Chao Phraya, can be reached by water taxi. It houses dealers offering furniture, jewelry and fabrics.

the person who digs them out of the ground, so there's no middleman markup," says Platt, who eyes several bowls from Lop Buri, an ancient city some seventy-five miles north of Bangkok. The ceramics are attributed to the Sukhothai period (mid-thirteenth to mid-fourteenth century), Thailand's golden age of art and one with a lot of cachet among Western collectors.

Platt also visits Mangrai, to see its turn-of-the-century

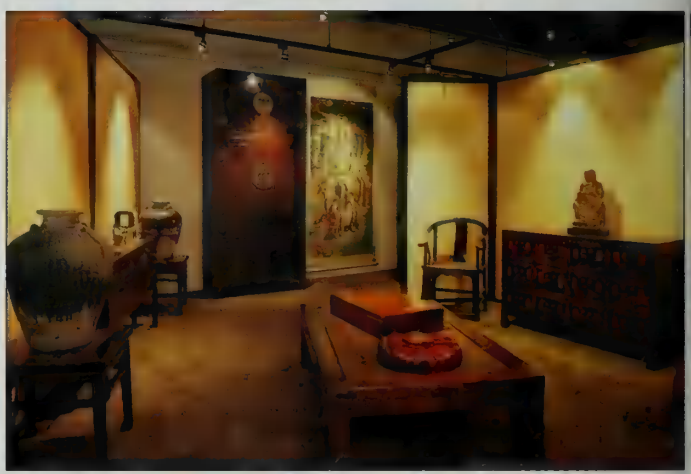
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back in the United States.

On one such visit, a four-day trip, his first stop is the Chatuchak Weekend Market, on Sunday morning. Located in the city's north district, it is a labyrinth of shops and stalls grouped by types of products—clothing, plants, foods, leather goods, decorative materials and antiques. "This is where the great bargains are, so it's a good idea to see what's available here before going to the stores near the hotels," Platt advises. Chatuchak is also a place for travelers to hone their skills at haggling, a practice that is common even in luxury shops. He suggests holding out for something close to 20 percent off the asking price on any article.

He wends his way to Busabong, an antique ceramics shop hidden far in the back of the market. "Presumably, they buy their pieces directly from



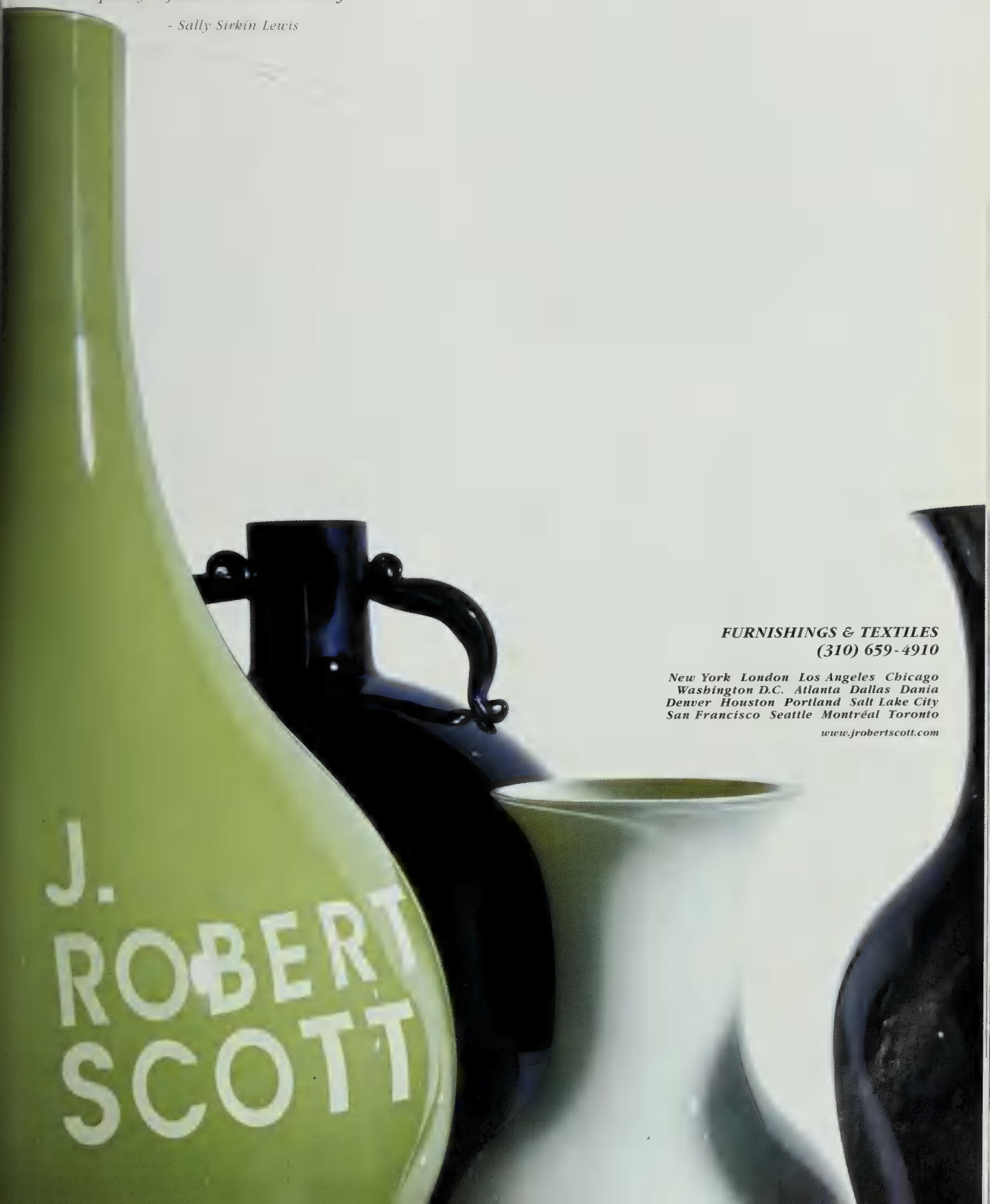


ABOVE: "The Ashwood Gallery displays few objects. The furniture consists of quite rare pieces, ones that appeal more to contemporary Asian taste."

LEFT: Platt inspects the weave of a floral silk at the renowned Jim Thompson shop. "They have top-quality Thai silk in every imaginable color."

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THE BEST OF BANGKOK



RIGHT: "I visit Lotus at the Regent Hotel for beautiful fabrics, accessories and jewelry," says Platt, who is seated in the teak-paneled showroom.



FAR RIGHT: "The store is like a jewel box; objects for sale are hidden in 'closets' underneath the floor." A selection of batiks hangs at right.

continued from page 36

baskets, which are notable for their tight, intricate weave. "I find it amazing that these baskets had a utilitarian purpose and yet so much time was spent on their detail and design," he says. Picking up a basket, he declares it "a piece of art you could proudly place on a mantel just to look at."

Monday begins with an experience diametrically opposed to the weekend market —a trip to River City, a modern mall. "An amazingly ugly building," Platt says with a sigh, unable to suppress his architectural sensibilities. "But there are top dealers here in fabrics, furniture and antiques. And the shops themselves are quite nicely designed." Yet another selling point for the mall is its location on Bangkok's main waterway, the Chao Phraya River, which enables travelers to arrive from their hotels by a leisurely boat ride and thus avoid the nerve-racking street congestion.

At the mall, Platt goes to one of the two Ashwood Gallery stores (there is another shop elsewhere in Bangkok). The French-born owner, Jean-Michel Michel, has developed an excellent eye for antique Asian furniture during a lifetime spent mostly in the Far East. "He has pieces of such quality that, at a certain point, price is no object," Platt comments. As an example, he cites a small nineteenth-century Chinese low table, made of wood from the now extinct *huanghuali* tree, that commands upward of twenty-five thousand dollars. Ashwood displays relatively few objects, arranging them as they might look in a pri-

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LEFT: "Alex Kerr, who owns Chiiori, is a world authority on traditional forms of Japanese art. He's a fantastic source for anything Japanese."

"The way that objects are arranged is very important to Alex," notes Platt. ABOVE: A jar rests on a small altar table before a screen.





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THE BEST OF BANGKOK

continued from page 38

vate home. "In other Bangkok stores you see too many things junked together, and you expect to pay less for them," says Platt. "Michel understands the Western shopping mentality: By setting pieces far apart, he gives them a more valuable look."

On Tuesday Platt heads for the Regent Hotel shopping complex. "Normally one associates hotel stores with overpriced articles and tourist traps," he concedes. "But Bangkok can be such a daunting city for foreigners to get around in. Some of the better shops in the city are located in the luxury hotels."



LEFT: Woven baskets catch Platt's eye at Mangrai at the Chatuchak Weekend Market. Behind him are three *garuda* boat fittings.



BELOW: The Chatuchak clock tower rises above the stalls. "You'll find good bargains here on everything from clothing to antiques."

His first stop at the Regent is Lotus Arts de Vivre, which sells fabrics and accessories. Platt removes his shoes at the entrance and steps up to the elevated wood floor. The gallery has glass cases that contain samples; the objects are stored in bins under the floor in front of each case. The owners spend half the year scouring the most exotic corners of Asia to replenish their inventory. "I would definitely consider using some of their small sculptures in my designs," says Platt. "Also, their batiks make wonderful throws for a bed or a sofa."

In the afternoon he hires a car and driver from his hotel for a few more hours of

BANGKOK SOURCES

1 **ARISRA GALLERY**
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66-2-630-6131
Sculptures of Buddha

2 **THE ASHWOOD GALLERY**
River City
Shop 314 (Third Floor)
Shop 430 (Fourth Floor)
23 Yotha Road
66-2-237-0077
ext. 314 or 430
Antique Asian furniture

3 **JIM THOMPSON**
9 Surawong Road
66-2-632-8100
Thai silk

4 **LOTUS ARTS DE VIVRE**
Parichart Court
Regent Hotel
155–157 Ratcha Dampi
66-2-250-0732
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5 **CHIIORI LTD.**
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6 **CHATUCHAK WEEKEND MARKET**
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JAMES LAISH

THE BEST OF BANGKOK

shopping. He drops by Chiiori, which is owned by Alex Kerr, an American-born private dealer in fine Chinese and Japanese furniture, scrolls, books and other art objects. Kerr has lived most of his life in Japan and has written acclaimed essays on its culture and books in Japanese. He works out of an apartment, using three or four rooms as galleries. His inventory—Buddhist paintings, a Chinese low table, ceramics—is exhibited like art. "The placement of every object has a particular significance," says Platt. "Each piece is unique and appealing and of unbelievable quality."

Platt spends Wednesday morning at the Jim Thompson shop, perhaps the most famous silk store in Asia. Thompson, a former United States intelligence agent in the Far East, settled in Bangkok after World War II and single-handedly revived the country's traditional silk industry. His handwoven fabrics gained enthusiastic clients among European and American fashion designers. Then in 1967, while on a vacation in the highlands of Malaysia, Thompson disappeared, never to be seen again.

The mystery of his life and death has enhanced his legend (and the silk business he left behind) over the last three decades. Thompson's house is a much-visited landmark. The shop, some ten minutes away (on a good traffic day), is a mecca for silk lovers. "Every time I come here I buy fabrics—very simple whites, creams, grays—and keep them until some client wants them for a sofa or a chair," says Platt. "Thai silk that's used for upholstery has a big, heavy-tooth weave, like cotton."

Next Platt makes his way to Arisra Gallery, which specializes in Buddhist sculptures. The store has works of all historical periods from Cambodia, Laos and Burma. There are prohibitions in Thailand on the export of antique Buddhist sculptures; Platt buys only the less expensive ones. "I stay away from stone heads that look like they were cut from sculptures at an archaeological site," he notes. He advises travelers to purchase only sculptures that have been given export approval by the government's Fine Arts Department.

Platt tries to fit in some sight-seeing on every visit to Bangkok. This time he has only a few hours, which he decides to spend at the Grand Palace, a square-mile compound of royal buildings and temples off the Chao Phraya River. Like any great public park, it attracts large numbers of local people along with foreigners. Saffron-robed monks emerge from the Temple of the Emerald Buddha and accept food and other alms from passers-by, who are eager to "make merit," the Buddhist phrase for doing a good deed.

"The Grand Palace is such an idyllic compound," says Campion Platt. "I like to look at the reliefs in the cloisters. And the sculptures, with all that gold and silver, are truly amazing. Foreigners always talk about the awful aspects of this city—and they exist. That's why I keep coming back to the Grand Palace. It's the view of Bangkok I want to remember." □



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GUATEMALAN GETAWAY

QUINTA MACONDA IS ANTIGUA'S LATEST DESTINATION



"Guests are surrounded by the culture and art of Guatemala," John Heaton says of his colonial house in Antigua. LEFT: A table on a terrace displays primitive santos.

BELOW LEFT: Heaton, who named the house Quinta Maconda, landscaped the garden with native plants. He now rents the residence to executive groups and families.

Text by
Prince Michael of Greece
Photography by
Michael Calderwood

THE MARRIAGE BETWEEN John Heaton and the town of Antigua, Guatemala, was far from expected. What would a globe-trotting, swashbuckling collector such as he find to do in a venerable little town, besieged by its own past, in the middle of Central America? Indeed, what compelling reason might there be for a restless character like him to settle down at all?

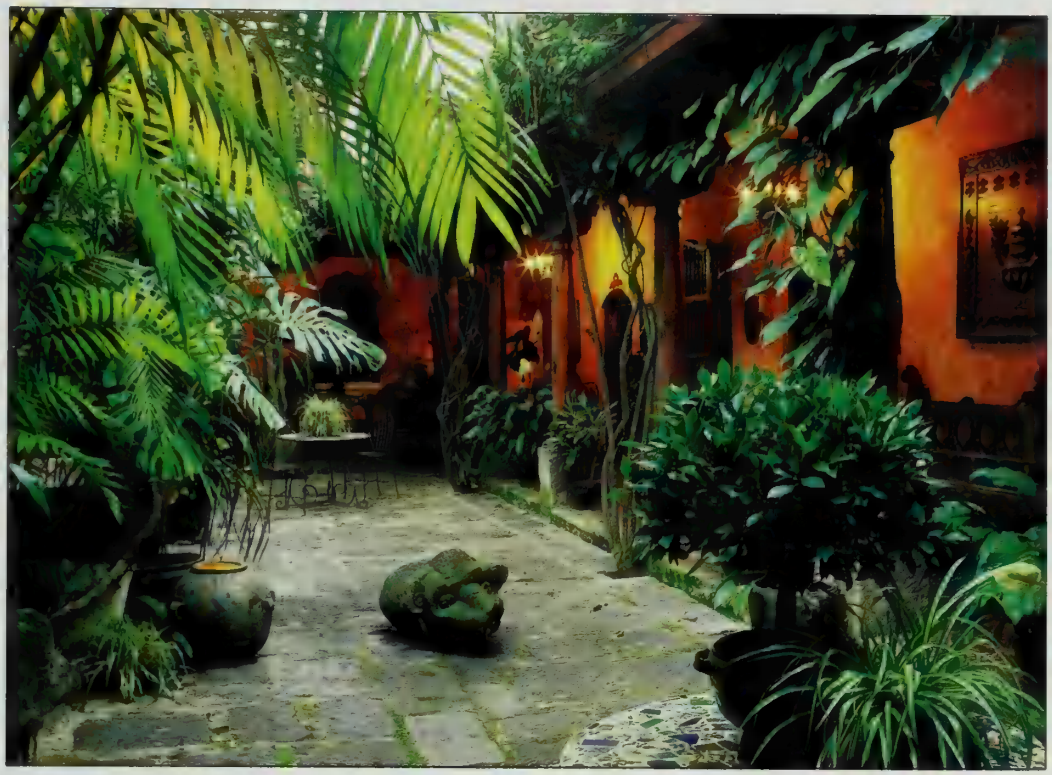
In the end it was the past of Antigua—a past dominated by the enigmatic Maya—and the incomparable beauty of the place that convinced him that this was where he wanted to be.

Antigua, the former capital of Guatemala, crouches in the curve of a green bowl encircled by the frayed summits of volcanoes. In John Heaton's own lyrical description, this part of Guatemala is "a region where the mountains and the clouds seem to be conducting an eternal love affair." Having built a retreat in the Guatemalan rain forest some years earlier (see *Architectural Digest*, January 1998), he was already familiar with the country when he decided, in 1990, to buy a house in Antigua. He quickly selected a two-story colonial in the heart of the old city. "For years the building had nothing but poets and ghosts in it, if you don't count the Peluquería Pompeii, a hairdressers' shop named after the ill-fated Roman city," Heaton says. Like the rest of the town, the house had barely survived the last major earthquake, in 1975. Its former owner, collector Eduardo Paredes, had



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GUATEMALAN GETAWAY



"I like to think of it as a highland base from which visitors can explore Mayan villages in the mountains." RIGHT: A stone jaguar head rests on a terrace.

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hired architects Marco Morales and Jorge Cabrerra to repair the house, although the garden remained an unkempt piece of land. Heaton immediately fell under its spell. He called it Quinta Maconda, after the place in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* where, writes Gabriel García Márquez, "the unexpected was a daily occurrence."

Heaton set out to "add colors and textures" to the house. He painted the rooms with earth-toned pigments,



"The larger pieces are mostly Guatemalan; the accents are from all over." LEFT: The primitive colonial low table in the living room "may have been a bed."

BELOW: Antique funerary urns are arranged on a credenza in the dining room; over them hangs a 19th-century carved polychrome panel.



installed mantelpieces decorated with mosaics and put in skylights. He then brought in objects and furniture that he had found over the years in various corners of Guatemala. "The chemistry started to change when I put my things in the house," Heaton notes. Finally, he added a number of colonial pieces that he bought from Paredes.

Some months later he and Paredes jointly purchased the house next door, Casa Brañas, which had belonged to the famed Guatemalan writer César Brañas. "We did it solely to acquire the rich inventory of colonial art and interesting decorative art pieces that came with it," Heaton says. The two spent a whole day "flipping a twenty-five-centavo coin and dividing the loot," he recalls. "There was no bloodshed, and we both came out with great pieces. My two best wins were the Murano chandelier, which is now in Quinta Maconda's living room, and the large stone jaguar head on the patio."

Heaton wanted Quinta Maconda to be a melting pot of Guatemalan traditions, blending the kind of imposing furniture that once graced large colonial residences with

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GUATEMALAN GETAWAY

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earthenware and everyday objects made by local craftsmen. There are also religious icons—statues of saints and Romanesque ex-votos.

But Heaton was not content merely to display the art of Central America. A tireless traveler, he has brought things home from far and wide, like a jackdaw lining its nest. Objects come from the Trobriand Islands of eastern New Guinea, rugs from Anatolia, fabrics from India, giltwood from Indonesia.



Heaton chose the colors for all the rooms, selecting warm shades for a guest bedroom. He also designed the mantelpiece, which has a mosaic border.

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GUATEMALAN GETAWAY

There remained the disheveled garden. Heaton entirely relandscaped it, planting trees and tropical shrubs of every shape, size and color and mingling a bewildering variety of flowers. "I wanted my garden to have tropical exuberance while retaining a certain mystery," he says, "so I slipped in some of the stone artifacts I found in the Brañas house, to give the undergrowth a little magic."

After completing the project, Heaton decided to share Quinta Maconda as well as his rain forest retreat, Rancho el Corozal, with other travelers. With the help of his assistant, Alicia Aragon, he now rents them out to families and executive groups. "Quinta Maconda is a place where travelers can feel safe, and they can use it as a base when exploring the country," he says.



A statue of Santa Clara in a sitting area has a Huichol hat and a Masonic sword. "I didn't want the colonial religious aspect to be too overbearing," he says.

John Heaton, who is dedicated to preserving Guatemalan architecture, realized some time ago that the ancestral traditions of the Highland Maya were on the brink of extinction. So he set up a weaving workshop to make textiles, shawls, napkins, tablecloths and bedcoverings, which he displays at the entrance to Quinta Maconda. It is one more delight in a place that already has countless pleasures. □



KUBA TEXTILES

ASSESSING THE BOLDLY PATTERNED DESIGNS FROM AFRICA



COURTESY PAUL HUGHES

Panel from a Woman's Underskirt, early 20th century. Raffia; 28" x 36". A panel decorated with appliqués exemplifies the Kuba delight in abstract patterning. Paul Hughes, London.

By Christopher Finch

THERE IS A WELL-known photograph by Cartier-Bresson that shows Henri Matisse in his bedroom. On the walls hang rectangles of fabric decorated with geometric motifs. Close inspection shows many of these to be examples of the textile art produced by the Kuba peoples, an alliance of tribes (or subtribes) that has long been established in the isolated savanna regions of what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo, once known as Zaire.

Despite the political shifts implicit in such name changes, the Bantu-speaking Kuba clans make up an autonomous independent "kingdom" several hundred years old, ruled by a monarch belonging to the dominant Bushoong people. Each village within the king's orbit has a chief and a complex hierarchy of nobility. With this elaborate social structure has come an emphasis on rich costume and exquisite possessions as a manifestation of status, found most strikingly in the astonishingly varied textiles that are a primary means of expression for Kuba women. This highly developed textile art is found in the form of rectangular ceremonial panels as well as wraparound skirts and over-

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KUBA TEXTILES



DON TUTTLE PHOTOGRAPHY

LEFT: *Woman's Ceremonial Skirt*, early 20th century. Raffia; 13' 4" x 2' 3½". The multiple colors of an appliquéd skirt indicate prestige. Andres Moraga, Berkeley, California.



COURTESY DAVID M. LANTZ

ABOVE: *Shoowa Ceremonial Panel*, 20th century. Raffia; 17" x 28⅛". A cut-pile textile exhibits the asymmetry typical of Kuba art. David M. Lantz, New York.



COURTESY DAVID M. LANTZ

BELOW: *Shoowa Ceremonial Panel*, 20th century. Raffia; 13" x 30⁵⁄₁₆". A panel features a "smoke" design, one of hundreds of Kuba patterns. David M. Lantz, New York.

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skirts made up of multiple panels. Worn by men and women alike at court functions and at ritual dance ceremonies, the skirts can be almost thirty feet long.

The abstract motifs and vital appliqué "cutouts" characteristic of such textiles fascinated—and inspired—not only Matisse but other European artists as well. Painters as dissimilar as Gustav Klimt and Paul Klee collected Kuba fabrics and, with Matisse, helped bring the Kuba emphasis on economy of line, pure form and surface patterning to the evolution of European modernism.

Kuba cloth is woven on a simple loom from thin strands cut from the leaves of the raffia palm. When the fibers are treated by bleaching, wetting and pounding, the cloth can be as soft as linen. The size of the panels is dictated by the length of the fibers, a typical panel being approximately twenty-four by twenty-six inches. Once removed from the loom, the panels are decorated by women, using a variety of techniques. These include uncut or cut embroidery, used to create flat geometric patterns or cut-pile designs with a rich, carpet-like appearance. Patchwork and appliqué are used as well, with the latter resulting in decoration that is more asymmetrical and freer in concept. Dyes are employed to create and to enhance patterns. Tie-dyeing is sometimes encountered, and both traditional and synthetic pigments have been used in the production of twentieth-century Kuba textiles. An unusual purplish color, for example, is derived from mimeograph ink, but such synthetic dyes are utilized with discretion and subtlety.

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COURTESY TEXTILE ARTS

LEFT: *Woman's Ceremonial Skirt* (detail), 20th century. Raffia; 19' 2½" x 2' ½". Dyes are used to create contrasts in color in a tie-dyed skirt. Textile Arts, Santa Fe.

RIGHT: *Ceremonial Skirt* (detail), 20th century. Raffia; 31" x 122". Interlocking appliquéd shapes create a feeling of movement on a Ngongo skirt. Gail Martin, New York.

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In the finest examples, the level of craft involved is extremely high, and the variety of patterns is remarkable. Often the decorative techniques employed and the kind of design favored will indicate the work of a particular Kuba subgroup, but the cross-fertilization of ideas sometimes makes the exact place of origin difficult to ascertain. Such exchanges of influence were encouraged by the fact that fine textile items were assigned negotiable value, almost like precious metals, and apparently were traded in important intertribal dealings. The king regularly received tributes from his subjects in the form of decorated fabric panels and ceremonial garments.

Precursors of the Kuba textiles known today were first seen in Europe in the seventeenth century, when they were brought back by early explorers. The surviving examples from that period are limited in chromatic range and display a powerful but somewhat rigid sense of pattern. The fabrics sought by contemporary collectors are more brightly colored and far more imaginative.



DON TUTTLE PHOTOGRAPHY

LEFT: *Woman's Ceremonial Skirt* (detail), 20th century. Raffia; 14' 10" x 2' 8". Kuba artists value contrast and design variation within traditional patterns. Andres Moraga, Berkeley, California.

These date from a period beginning in the nineteenth century and lasting until after World War II. (Exact dates are hard to determine because political unrest and other factors have made field research unusually difficult.)

Mary Hunt Kahlenberg, of the Textile Arts gallery in Santa Fe, has curated several museum shows featuring Kuba textiles and explains that during this period a "combination of circumstances brought the Kuba the stability and wealth that enabled them to indulge their love of fine craft objects associated with particular ceremonies."

A modest flow of Kuba textiles to the West began around the turn of the century, as the region came under Belgian colonial rule. Typically these materials found their way into ethnographic institutions, such as the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, which received part of its col-



COURTESY GAIL MARTIN GALLERY

KUBA TEXTILES



Man's Ceremonial Skirt (detail), 20th century. Raffia; 2' 9" x 24'. Textured checked and tie-dyed panels characterize an office-holder's skirt. Andres Moraga, Berkeley, California.

lection from the Dadaist poet Tristan Tzara. Until recently, the enthusiasm of Tzara and artists such as Matisse and Klee was not shared by art museums.

"Curators and critics were very slow to recognize the value of textiles in general and Kuba textiles in particular," says David M. Lantz, whose New York gallery is presenting an exhibition of Kuba skirts and ceremonial squares in January. "Where African art is concerned, the emphasis was always on sculpture. Textiles were looked at as purely decorative. It's only in the last couple of decades that this attitude has begun to change."

Lantz notes that the traditional focus on sculpture has had some incidental benefits for textile collectors. "Because textiles have been overlooked, the prices remain reasonable." There is general agreement among dealers that fine cut-pile ceremonial squares (which often feature the most imaginative of Kuba designs) can still be found for as little as $1,000, with outstanding examples costing as much as $5,000. The price for quality long skirts begins at $2,500, with $35,000 generally marking the upper limit.

The market began to build in the early eighties, explains Andres Moraga, a dealer based in Berkeley, California, when there was a great infusion of Kuba textiles into Europe and America. "The material became available in part be-

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KUBA TEXTILES

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cause the Kuba king had given his people permission to sell. It was still almost impossible for Westerners to visit the region, but itinerant African traders brought things out, and dealers in Belgium trained them to look for desirable pieces. This flow lasted only until 1987 and then diminished to a trickle."

"There was a period in the eighties," says Lantz, "when I would see hundreds of pieces a month, brought to either Brussels or New York by African traders. Most of it was ordinary, but maybe one percent was outstanding. By the early nineties the supply had dried up."

In recent decades tastes among the Kuba have begun to change. Some young women prefer to wear modern Western fabrics, but there are still people who retain a mastery of traditional techniques. However, they no longer employ them exclusively to produce ceremonial textiles. Too often their skills are used to make inferior export pieces.

"I've seen supposedly old textiles," Moraga cautions, "that were blatant copies of pieces that have been reproduced in books or catalogues."

"To a large extent," says Peter Adler, a London dealer in ethnographic textiles, "the trade in latter-day Kuba textiles is fueled by decorators who use them as wall hangings. The designs are sometimes traditional, but they're likely to be coarsely worked, and if you touch them, they're apt to feel harsh and prickly."

"One thing the collector must be especially careful of," warns Lantz, "is skirts that are made up of elements that may be genuine but that are assembled in ways that don't follow any kind of Kuba logic. I see these all the time now. Some unscrupulous person will take several authentic skirts that have been damaged or are incomplete in order to salvage the good panels. These are then recomposed into a new skirt without regard for tradition. The parts may be real, but they don't belong together, so the whole is a modern pastiche."

Top-quality Kuba textiles combine exuberant visual invention with exquisite craftsmanship. There are hundreds of traditional patterns—each one bearing a name and usually made up of chevrons, rectangles and other angular motifs—but every panel amounts to an original variation on one of these themes. Nor are the variations always slight. Monni Adams, of the Peabody Museum, has pointed out that sudden shifts of image and unexpected juxtapositions of design units are intentional and admired characteristics of Kuba textiles.

"Kuba designs are complex," says Gail Martin, of the Gail Martin Gallery in New York, "but they're also very bold and easy to read. There's no hidden imagery that requires explanation."

Lantz enlarges on this, noting that Kuba textiles are virtually unique among ethnographic fabrics in that the patterns do not seem to encode language in pictographic form. "So far as we can tell, a diamond shape, for in-



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KUBA TEXTILES

stance, does not signify a settlement or a kind of animal or anything else. Kuba textiles are not iconographic. They are unadulterated, two-dimensional designs, free of concealed meanings, and that is highly unusual."

Douglas Dawson, of Chicago's Douglas Dawson Gallery, remarks that while there is a logic and coherence that runs through all of the best Kuba design, some of the finest examples "hover on the edge of order," striking a balance between symmetry and asymmetry that is especially exhilarating.

As for craftsmanship, this is apparent both to the eye and to the touch. The cut-pile panels, for example, have the luxurious appearance one associates with fine rugs. To be fully appreciated, they must be handled so that the soft texture of the fabric and the richness and density of the pile can be evaluated.

As might be imagined, the Bushoong court, at Mushenge, the capital, was the greatest repository of high-quality textiles, but many originated among other Kuba groups. Some of the best examples are in fact the work of neighboring subtribes, such as the Shoowa, Ngongo and Ngeende, who retain their own ethnic identities yet continue to enjoy strong cultural and political links to the Bushoong suzerainty.

> Some of the finest examples strike a balance between symmetry and asymmetry that is especially exhilarating.

"The sense of invention gives an edge of excitement to Kuba art," says Adler. "It's perhaps most evident in the ceremonial squares, where it seems that there was considerable competition among the women to see who could come up with the most original patterns. The greatest honor was to have a pattern named for you."

The importance of two-dimensional motifs to the Kuba is illustrated by the fact that each Kuba king was expected to create his own unique pattern. During the 1920s missionaries brought a motorcycle to Mushenge in the hope of dazzling the Kuba with a miracle of European technology. Far from being impressed by the alien machine, the reigning monarch, King Kwete, was instead entranced by the pattern made by its tires in the soil. He was, in fact, so taken with the geometric repeats imprinted in the mud that he had them recorded so that they could enter the lexicon of Kuba art. To this day, the pattern is known as Kwete's design. □



KENYA'S HIPPO MANOR

ENGLISH-STYLE AMENITIES IN THE GREAT RIFT VALLEY

Text by Elizabeth Lambert/Photography by Tim Beddow

MOST PEOPLE CAN ONly take so much safari," says Dodo Cunningham-Reid, who offers alternative activities at her ten-room guesthouse at Hippo Manor, on Lake Naivasha in Kenya's wildlife-filled Great Rift Valley. "When they've had enough of the heat and the dust and the bumpety-bump, this is the place to recover."

In fact, she says, after a long day spent chasing and photographing big game, most guests are happy to learn that they need only sit quietly in Hippo Manor's English-style garden and a cavalcade of wild animals will come to them. "Out come the books and binoculars, and they're ticking off the pelicans, flamingoes and rare birds flying past. Colobus monkeys play in the trees. In the evening, hippos lurch out of the water; then gazelles, antelope, buffalo, zebras and impalas come to drink at the lake. Giraffes walk along the path, right below the garden; what you see is a parade of heads passing by. It's almost kitsch—an animal carnival in the scrub of the African wilderness just on the other side of my fence."



LEFT: Hippo Manor, a private guesthouse 60 miles outside Nairobi, offers visitors the chance to experience exotic wildlife from the tranquillity of its English-style garden.

BELOW LEFT: A sitting room "was a run-down storeroom," says owner Dodo Cunningham-Reid (below). Her rescue mission called for fireplaces, large windows and a new roof.





JONATHAN PILKINGTON

The situation is indeed a bit surreal—a mock-Tudor house, a fence to keep the hippos from eating the flowers—but this is a spot, after all, where colonials have historically indulged their architectural fantasies. In the 1920s and 1930s some built exotic dream houses—the fabled Moorish-style Djinn Palace (see page 122) and the glamorous Art Déco Sirocco House (see *Architectural Digest*, November 1996); others built houses that would remind them of home.

Eight years ago Michael

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KENYA'S HIPPO MANOR

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and Dodo Cunningham-Reid bought the estate at Hippo Manor, where she built a fanciful tower at the edge of the lake (see *Architectural Digest*, September 1995). Nearby, hidden among the fever trees, this half-timber throwback to 1930s English suburbia slumbered on. A beautiful old woman—the last member of the family who had built the house and planted the garden—lived out her days there. The house crumbled, and the garden became overgrown. Then the old woman died.

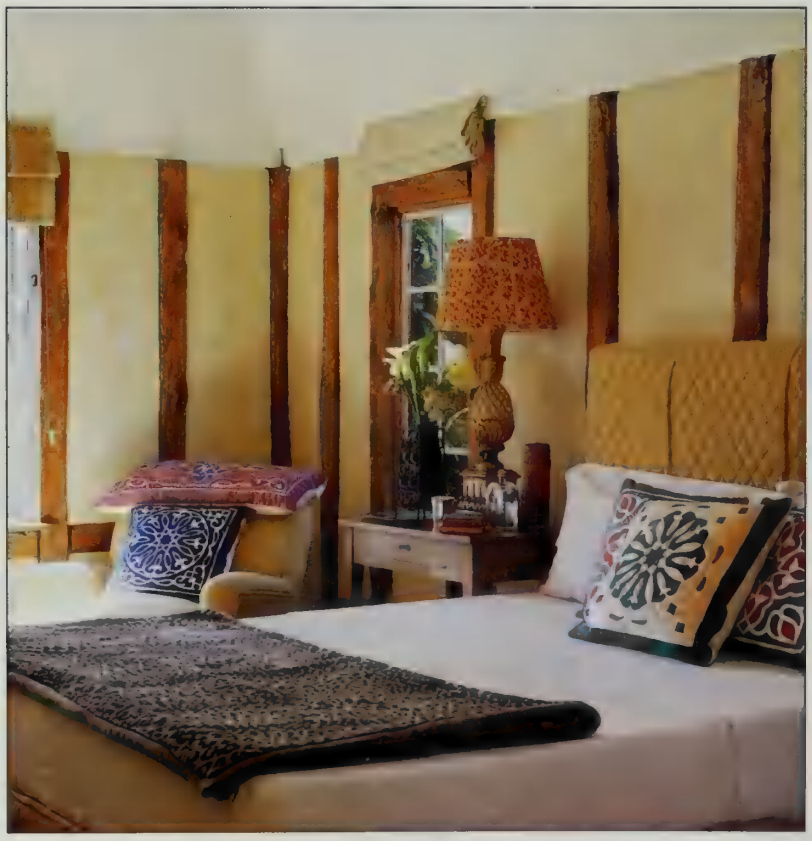


"Life here is informal," says Cunningham-Reid. "No black tie for dinner, as in the past." LEFT: On a dining table, cobalt beakers mix with 19th-century bowls from Zanzibar.

"What could I do?" says Cunningham-Reid. "I had just finished the tower. I wasn't ready to begin a new project, but if I left the house empty, it would be invaded by dust, grass, birds, creepers, rats and bats. For one split second I thought about handing the whole thing over to someone else. But my husband said, 'You must be crazy.' So I found the energy from somewhere and started over."

When Cunningham-Reid began the renovation, the house's roof was patched with corrugated metal and had caved in; she found old tiles and redid the roof completely. Pipes outside the house "looked like a map of the London Underground," she recalls. After installing new plumbing, she set about restoring the timbers, which had been painted black. With a team of local workmen, she began "scraping and sanding, carefully chiseling the stone and uncovering the finely carved details in the wood—two and a half years of painstaking work." As she labored, old spaces revealed new possibilities: A barn became a

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LEFT: Bedroom walls restate the half-timbering of the façade. The Islamic-influenced patterns on the pillows were hand-appliquéd in Zanzibar by Arab artisans.

Linen sheets for Hippo Manor's beds were imported from Russia to England, then brought to Kenya by Cunningham-Reid. ABOVE: Colorful fabrics brighten a rustic bedroom.

Oleg Zhivetin



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KENYA'S HIPPO MANOR



After a day's safari, says Cunningham-Reid, "guests long for a hot bath; then what they really want to do is nothing." LEFT: A mural in a bath depicts an indigenous fever tree.





BELOW: A whimsical fabric reprinted from an Elizabethan design covers a mahogany safari chair. BELOW RIGHT: The garden overlooks Lake Naivasha and the Mau hills.

continued from page 58

sitting room; stables became bedrooms; a dovecote became a video room.

"Then I panicked," says Cunningham-Reid. "I always panic when the structural work on a house is finished and I suddenly realize there's nothing inside. So I think about colors. That calms me down." She looked outside her window to the pale tones of the fever trees, which had grown even paler in the dry season. "The magic of this place is the hazy, misty color under the African sun," she says. "I thought I could try to catch that, but it would mean inventing my own techniques, since there's not much choice of paints in Africa." First she applied an undercoat, then a layer of eggshell followed by layers of washes made with turpentine, linseed oil and pigments from artists' paints, "often a blue-green underneath, with ocher or sienna on top," she explains. "Each room is different."

In furnishing the house, Cunningham-Reid kept in mind the African heat—which meant "nothing overstuffed"—and a desire to balance native traditions with colonial ones. Locally made furniture

continued on page 62

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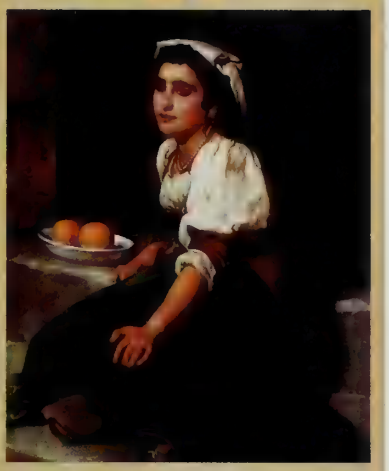
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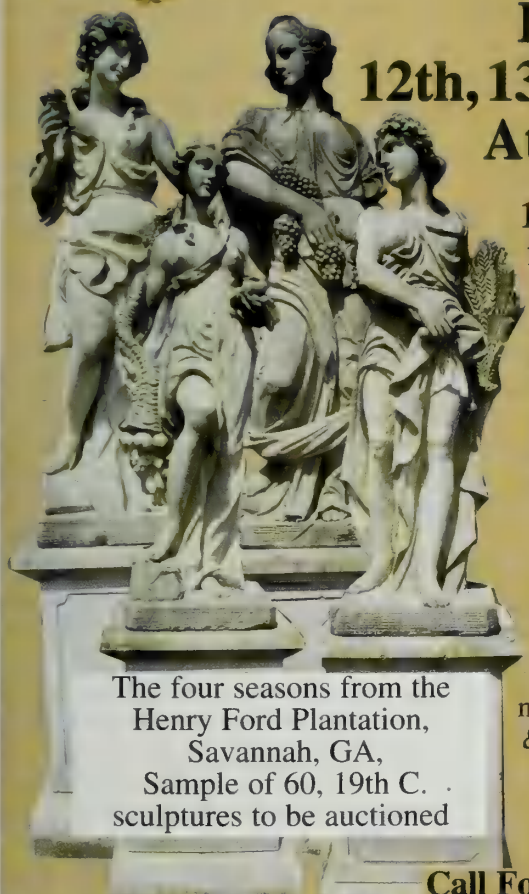


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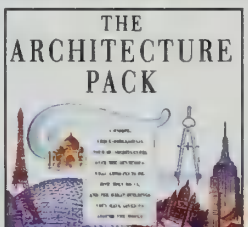
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AD TRAVELS

KENYA'S HIPPO MANOR

continued from page 60

was easy enough to find, but "I had to buy colonial furniture in London," she says, "as it had all been shipped back to England by civil servants when Kenya became independent. And a friend bought antiques at auction in France. I shipped one big container, but then —because importing things is a very uncertain business in Kenya—my husband and I brought everything else with us each time we traveled back from

> "It's almost kitsch—an animal carnival in the scrub of the African wilderness just on the other side of my fence," says Cunningham-Reid.

London: suitcases full of linen sheets, hand baggage full of knives, forks and bathroom fittings."

She found there were things she could do in Africa that she couldn't have done in Europe, like design her own fire surrounds and have them carved in stone or cedar. "Everything takes time in Africa," she says. "Everything will be done by hand, and it will be done at least four times before it's just right."

Housekeeping in rural Kenya presents its own set of challenges. "There are plenty of staff, but no machines," says Cunningham-Reid. "Machines break and no one knows how to fix them; and with frequent electrical failures, they're not much use anyway. To polish the hardwood floors, the staff stack up the furniture, roll up the carpet, put sheepskin on their feet and go skating. My two children can remember being strapped onto their ayah's back while she skated around, doing the polishing."

That Hippo Manor, like the Great Rift Valley surrounding it, moves at a slower pace than the rest of the world is part of what makes it so alluring, Cunningham-Reid points out. "People arrive from New York and say, 'Where's the fax?' I tell them to relax. You have to be patient

KENYA'S HIPPO MANOR

here. Two writers and a composer have come here just to work. It's that sort of place. Guests are always thanking us, because they know they've come somewhere very private. Unlike at the game reserves, where guides get the news of a sighting on their mobile phones and the striped minibuses converge, with hundreds of tourists staring at one animal, here there's no one else around."

The entire six-hundred-acre estate, an hour-and-a-half drive from Nairobi, is at guests' disposal. In the evening they can drive into the hills behind the house or walk down the lane to see zebras, impalas, gazelles or buffalo. They can ride out on horses in the early morning to see giraffes emerging from the mist. A leopard goes out on the jetty at night and sits on a boat. By morning it is gone.

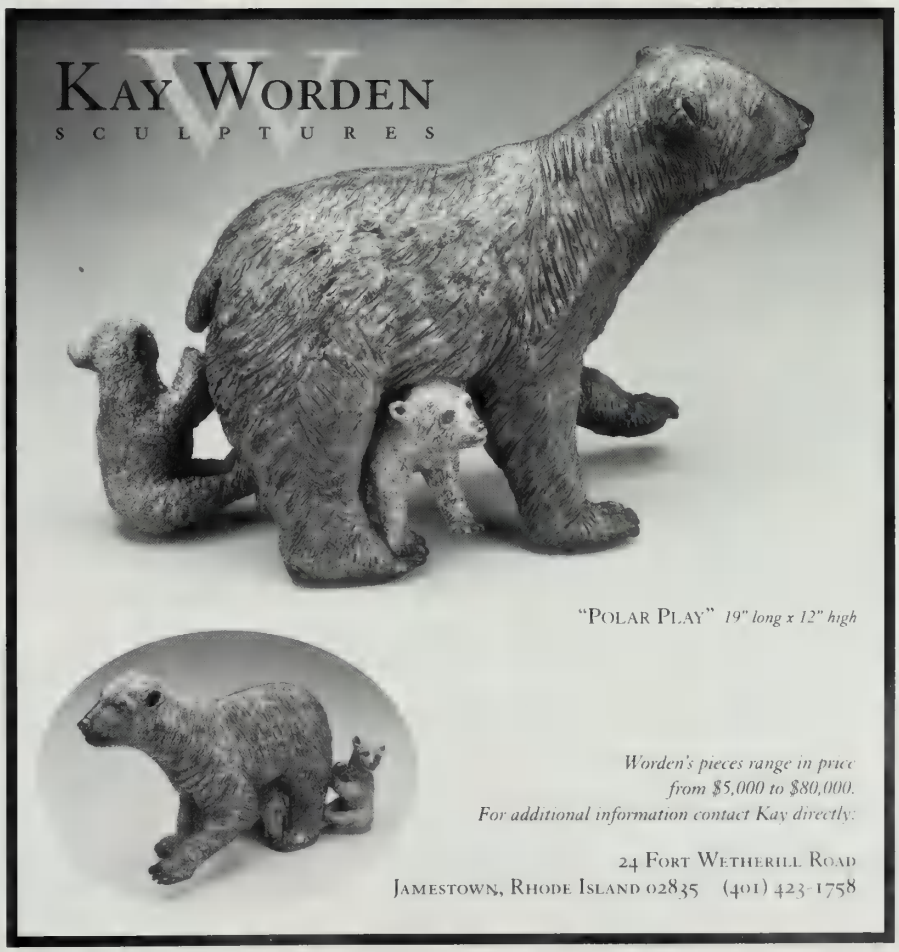
Lion sightings are rare, and there are no elephants nearby; but for those guests who wish to see them, Cunningham-Reid can arrange for a charter plane to take them to the Masai Mara National Reserve for the day and get them back in time for a hot bath before dinner. Or she can telephone her friends and plan visits to other private estates.

"This is the African dream," she says. "Restoring any house here may be the African nightmare, but I've already done that. Guests can just enjoy it. Why do I keep battling with houses in Africa? Some people write, some paint, some photograph; I make houses. It's my creative urge, my contribution.

"Africa has given me so much," she continues. "I wanted to give something back. That was why I built the tower; that was why I restored this house. They're for yesterday and tomorrow, for backwards and forward. Perhaps someday some lost tourist will see my tower and this Tudor house and will wonder whose dreams could have created such things. I know it could all disappear, but that knowledge gives one a kind of fatalism, the idea that nothing is forever. Be grateful and contribute your little bit." □

For more information, contact Hippo Manor, c/o Harewood House, at P.O. Box 24930, Nairobi, Kenya; telephone 254-2-891621, fax 254-2-746598.





S. Sam Park



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A LEGENDARY JEWEL ON THE COTE D'AZUR

LA FIORENTINA'S TIMELESS GRACE IS ARTFULLY MAINTAINED IN ST.-JEAN-CAP-FERRAT

Text by Aileen Mehle/Photography by Durston Saylor



Last night I dreamed I went to La Fiorentina again. The dream came true. I *was* there, caught once more in the magic spell of one of the most beautiful houses on earth.

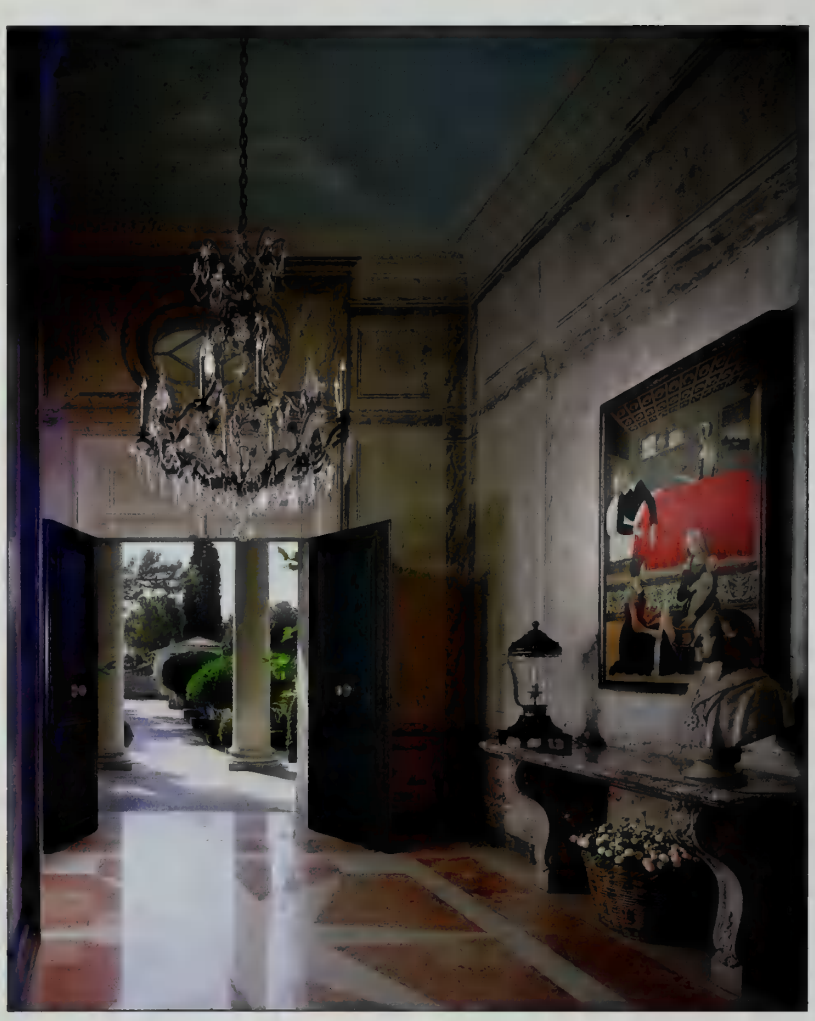
The approach, marked by two massive stone columns at the entrance, leads to a great courtyard shining with white gravel. A demigrove of orange trees, their trunks lime-painted white, lines the area in precise rows—twenty sentinels guarding a palace. And there on a rise reached by nearly a score of stone steps, its façade embraced by six Ionic columns, stands La Fiorentina in all its Palladian glory.

La Fiorentina is the most jewel-like of villas, situated on a superb point of land in St.-Jean-Cap-Ferrat on the French Riviera. The peninsula juts between the Mediterranean on one side and Beaulieu Bay on the other. To call the setting and its views breathtaking is to damn with faint praise.

Such a house warrants a fascinating history, and that it has. Its first owner was Comtesse Robert de Beauchamp, who built it in 1914 and subsequently sold it to Sir Edmund Davis. Enid, Lady Kenmare, purchased it from

La Fiorentina in St.-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, France, was built in 1914 and restored by Lady Kenmare and her son, Rory Cameron, in the 1940s. ABOVE: Ionic columns support the grand portico, whose design was inspired by Palladio's Villa Rotonda. LEFT: Falconet Sphinxes border the steps.

When the current residents moved into the house 28 years ago, they asked Billy Baldwin to personalize the interiors for them. BELOW: *Birth of the Virgin* by the Master of Liverpool hangs in the entrance hall near an 18th-century marble bust of Cardinal Joseph Fesch.



his widow in 1920. Then came World War II and the Germans, who not only occupied the house but fortified the grounds with machine-gun posts in the seawall, a sunken cannon emplacement in the garden and an air raid shelter nearby. When they realized the war was lost, they blew everything up, leaving chaos and the all but ruined house behind.

It was then that the formidable Lady Kenmare, a controversial Australian-born figure in international society, returned, intent on restoring what was left of the house she had been forced to leave. While she watched, the Germans, prisoners now, cleared the property of the tons of concrete they had laid down. When they finished, there was room for the garden of her heart's desire.

Lady Kenmare and her son, Rory Cameron, a noted tastemaker and interior designer, proceeded to plant all manner of flowers, shrubs and hedges and to bring in mature trees,

RIGHT: A collection of blue-and-white Chinese porcelain accents the blue salon, a reception room situated in the center of the villa. "The room is very much as Billy decorated it years ago," says the wife. "It would be difficult to improve on what he did."



RIGHT: *Still Life with Roses* by John Ferguson Weir is one of several American Impressionist works exhibited in the garden room. The biscuit statuette was modeled after Hiram Powers's mid-19th-century *Greek Slave*. The pair of gilt armchairs are Italian.



BELOW: "We often use the study as an office," says the wife. "Billy bought the English leather armchair when he first decorated the villa for us. The room also has Middle Eastern paintings." The oil is a mid-19th-century portrait of Fath Ali Shah Qajar.



including the giant cypresses that are so much a part of La Fiorentina's vistas.

Mother and son filled huge terra-cotta pots imported from Tuscany with flowering plants and placed them on the stone steps at the entrance, on the terraces surrounding the house and in the lovely loggia—its ceiling traced with ivy—where the current residents and their guests often dine alfresco. They envisioned as the focal point of all this beauty the six grassy steps that lead down to the rectangular saltwater swimming pool spilling into the Mediterranean. The steps are framed by Falconet Sphinxes, and there the cypresses seem taller than ever.

They then turned their attention to the house itself. They didn't need a decorator, but they did engage an architect to carry out their plans. Everything was razed except for the main walls and the foundation. What Cameron called "a poor pastiche of a Florentine villa" was rebuilt in the Palladian style. For inspiration he had visited Padua, Palladio's birthplace, where among the beautiful houses he encountered was the Rotonda, in nearby Vicenza, which became the genesis for the design of La Fiorentina's grand portico.

Much of what Cameron wrought still remains today—the pale buff color of the stucco-faced house, the second hallway, a marvel of trompe l'oeil (architectural drawings on vellum and a ceiling dome drawn in sepia on a sheet of folding paper). A spectacular find, a roman-

RIGHT: A Venetian chandelier illuminates the dining room, which has walls covered with an 18th-century Piedmontese oil-on-canvas painting. Louis XVI–style chairs complement silk-draped tables. Boats sailing across Beaulieu Bay can be seen from the window.



BELOW: "This intimate salon, which we call the club, adjoins the dining room and was painted in the same manner by Jean Claude Adenin. We use it as an extension of the dining room when weather requires us to move a large party indoors." In the niche is an 1836 Dantan l'Aine bust.

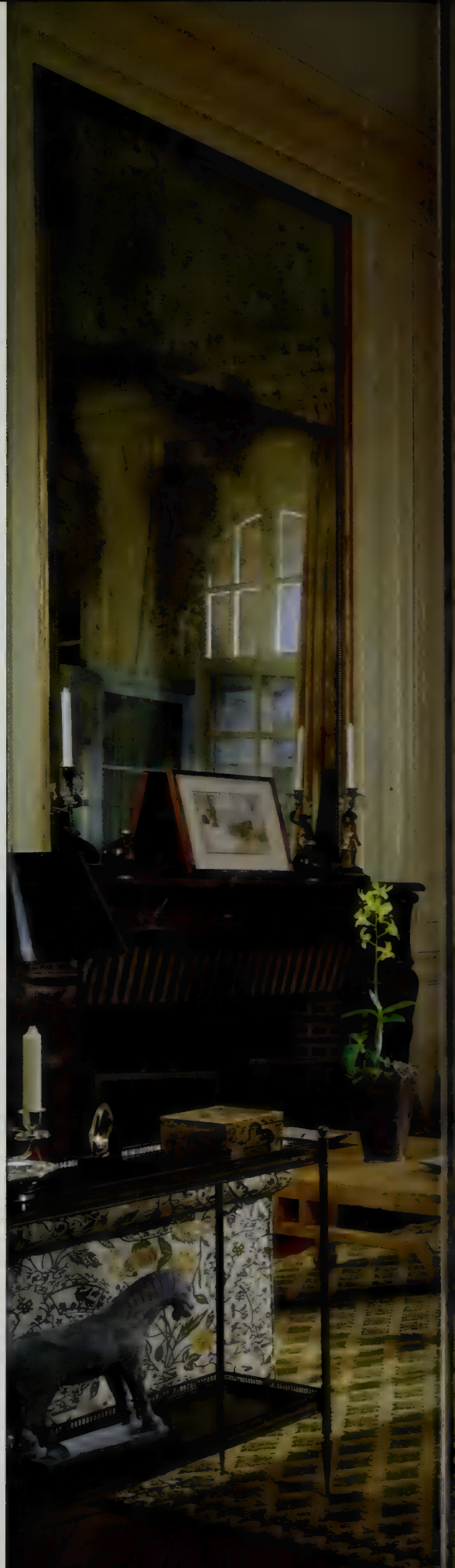


tic eighteenth-century Piedmontese scene on canvas, detached from its original wall, was transferred to La Fiorentina's dining room—it's a riot of trees, birds, castles and putti. A Venetian chandelier hangs overhead, and through the windows one can see the sea.

It's impossible to describe this wonderful indoor-outdoor house without remarking on the light that floods it at all hours of the day. It streams into the blue salon through French doors that give onto the largest terrace and through matching doors across the room that open to the cloistered garden, with its display of Picasso plates, a playing fountain and geometric plantings—all too beautiful to be savored in one visit.

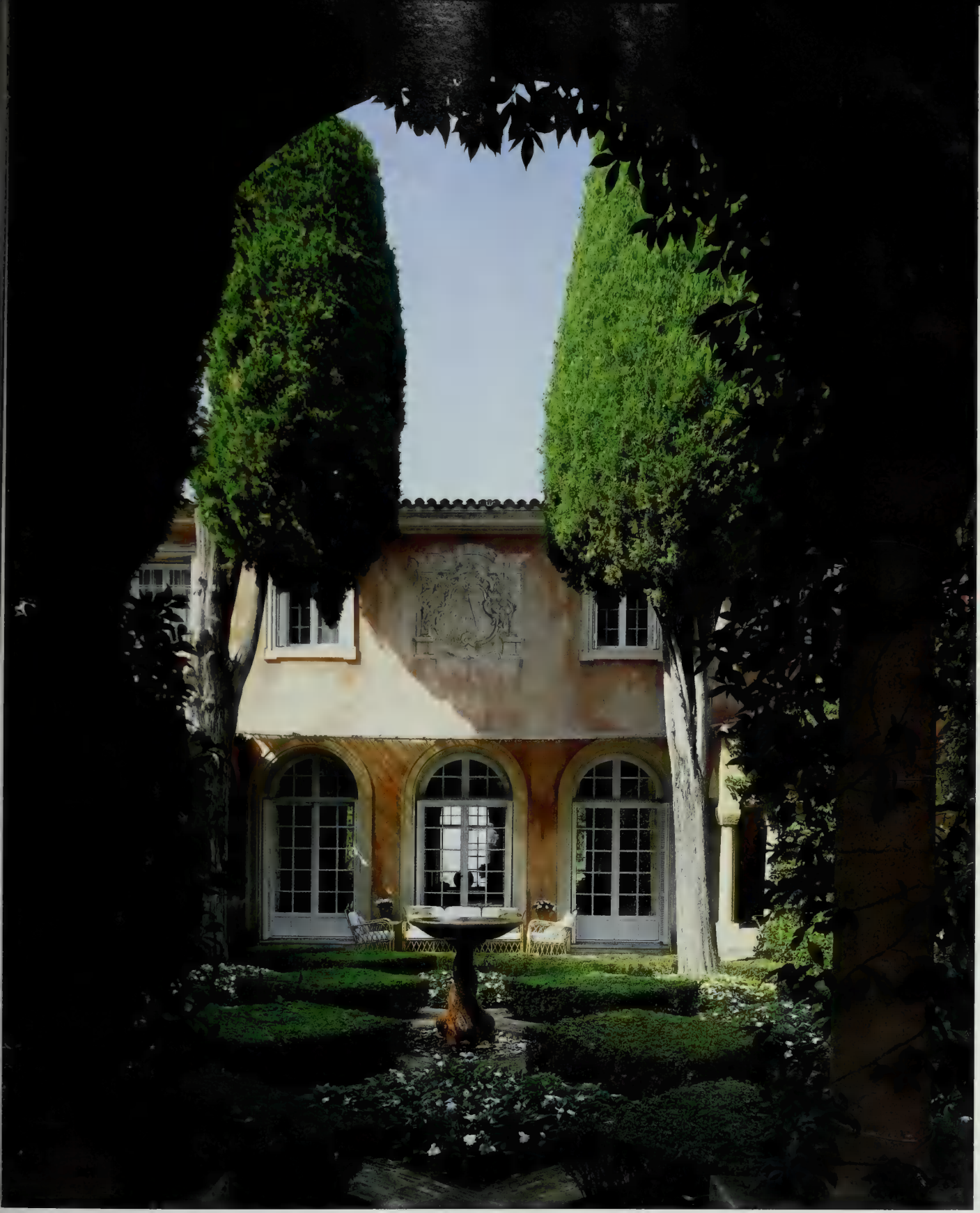
It was the marvelous light and other obvious temptations that made La Fiorentina irresistible to the residents. Having fallen in love with the place at first sight,

RIGHT: A collection of antique leather-bound books fills shelves in the library. At right stands a Louis XVI *bureau plat*, and behind it rests a Meissen monkey. The collages, at left, are by Ann Ryan. The French doors open onto a terrace, as do all the doors in the villa.









"After the war, the house was in shambles," explains the wife. "We retained a good deal of what Lady Kenmare and Rory had done in the reconstruction." OPPOSITE: *The Garden*, 1884, by Ralph Wormeley Curtis hangs in the wife's silk-swathed bedroom.

LA FIORENTINA IS THE MOST JEWEL-LIKE OF VILLAS, SITUATED ON A SUPERB POINT OF LAND.

ABOVE: The cloister off the blue salon is one of the many small gardens surviving from the original Florentine part of the villa. "It's a favorite place of mine to sit and read," notes the wife. Squares of box hedges alternate with beds of flowers that are changed according to the seasons.







the couple appreciated the innate loveliness and decided much should be left as it was.

But to make the house their own, they brought in Billy Baldwin, the legendary American interior decorator, who knew their impeccable taste, their style and their way of life. They are collectors of paintings, objets d'art and important furniture, an assemblage ranging from the oil of

continued on page 147

TOP: The saltwater pool runs alongside the sea. "When you swim in it, you have the illusion that the pool and the sea meet." ABOVE: "We enjoy having lunch or dinner here in fine weather," the wife says of the loggia. The lavender garden is edged in rosemary.

RIGHT: A contemporary version of a Palladian pavilion, designed by architect Tom Wilson, was added by the residents. "We treat this area by the freshwater pool as a summer living room. It's a fun place to have parties. The ever-present breezes make it particularly comfortable."



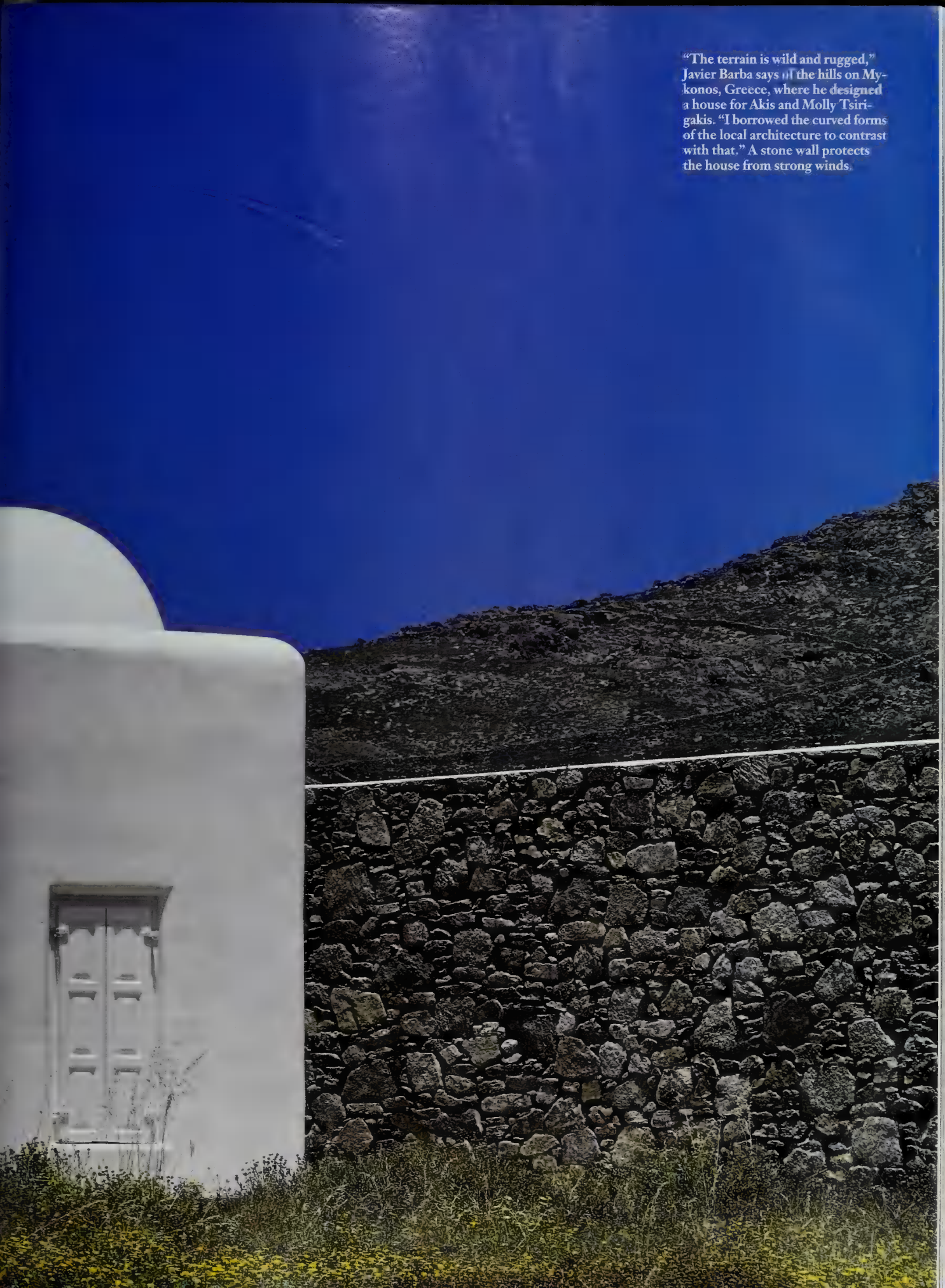
MYKONOS MOTIFS

A CONTEMPORARY RENDERING OF TRADITIONAL GREEK FORMS

Architecture by Javier Barba/Text by Nicholas Shrady/Photography by Scott Frances



EUGENIO PONS/COURTESY JAVIER BARBA



"The terrain is wild and rugged," Javier Barba says of the hills on Mykonos, Greece, where he designed a house for Akis and Molly Tsirigakis. "I borrowed the curved forms of the local architecture to contrast with that." A stone wall protects the house from strong winds.



The first time Javier Barba visited the mountainous site on Mykonos, Greece, where Akis and Molly Tsirigakis had commissioned him to build their island retreat, he found a flock of sheep, magnificent Aegean views, powerful winds and a rock formation with a diminutive lizard basking in the sun. "'I'm very sorry,'" Barba remembers saying to the reptile. 'I'm going to build a house around you, but when I'm done, I hope that you won't find the landscape too changed.'"

That rock jutting from the slope became, for Barba, the latest emblem of design integrated with its natural surroundings. Another architect would surely have blasted the rock to clear the area. Barba, however, not only let it stand but used its solid contours as an integral element in the house's interior. "The question," the Barcelona-based architect says, "was not, How do I get rid of this rock? but rather, How can I incorporate it, draw strength from it, embrace it?"

Before so much as rendering the roughest sketch, Barba, who collaborated on the Tsirigakis house with architect Susana Zanon, scoured the island, visiting monasteries, hermitages, windmills, churches and villages of whitewashed sugar-cube houses

Bridging the exterior and the interior, a large rock formation original to the site is incorporated into the house's entrance. The antique doors were found in old Greek villages and restored. Barba used Mykonos slate to pave the courtyard patio.

in search of the Mykonos vernacular from which to draw inspiration. What Barba saw was not altogether unfamiliar. "To work in the Mediterranean is to explore a common culture," he explains. "In Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece, one may find distinct architectural idioms, but we all speak the same language."

Unlike a great many other Greek islands, where the ruins of classical works pro-



LEFT: The roof of the residence has an expansive view of the terraced hills. Nearly every room is sited to face the sea beyond. Since the winds discourage the growth of taller bushes and trees, Barba landscaped the property with stones and indigenous plants.





LEFT: A glass pane in the entrance hall offers a view of the swimming pool and, below, the coastline. All the windows and openings were designed to frame diverse vistas. The vase, at right, and the planter are antique Greek marble.

vide a millennia-old backdrop, Mykonos has no ancient monuments. Nor does the island possess anything like Corfu's Venetian legacy, which so intrigued Barba when he designed a pool and pavilion for Lord Rothschild (see *Architectural Digest*, October 1995).

Mykonos's built landscape is humble and pure, and Barba's appropriation of the local vernacular was selective rather than slavish. He adopted the undulating lines and sensual surfaces and forms that define its traditional structures. He followed the ancient and sensible custom of whitewashing a house's exterior, a strategy that serves to reflect the heat while at the same time presenting an image of aesthetic purity. He resisted the temptation to use large glass surfaces to create open vistas and chose instead to design a multitude of windows of differing dimensions that would frame a variety of views. On the roof, he sculpted a cupola similar to those found in Greek monasteries, although its purpose, he admits, is "more profane, since this one is a dome that rises over the master bath."

Barba's greatest obstacle, however, was not one of form or materials but something far more volatile and unpredictable—the wind. "The Greeks call it the *meltemi*," he says. "It comes from the north, and it can be fierce. The Tsirigakis family spends a great deal of time outdoors, and creating generous spaces protected from the elements was essential." The architect



LEFT: Chestnut beams between the master bedroom and bath temper the blazing sunlight. Barba was inspired by the cupolas of local churches to design a dome over the master bath. A chimney rises above the bedroom.



designed a series of outer walls made of stones, many excavated from the site, which offer both shelter from the wind and a greater sense of intimacy. The house and the exterior walls envelop what is, in effect, an open-air living room, where terraces, an area shaded by massive chestnut beams and a pool all face south, with unobstructed views of the Mykonos harbor and the Aegean stretching to the horizon.

The interior of the house unfolds on a single floor and was conceived as "a succession of flowing spaces in which there is always a view of the sea and always an exit to a patio, terrace or shaded area," says Barba. "The landscape is continually being drawn into the interior or, in the case of the rock formation, rising up in the midst of it."

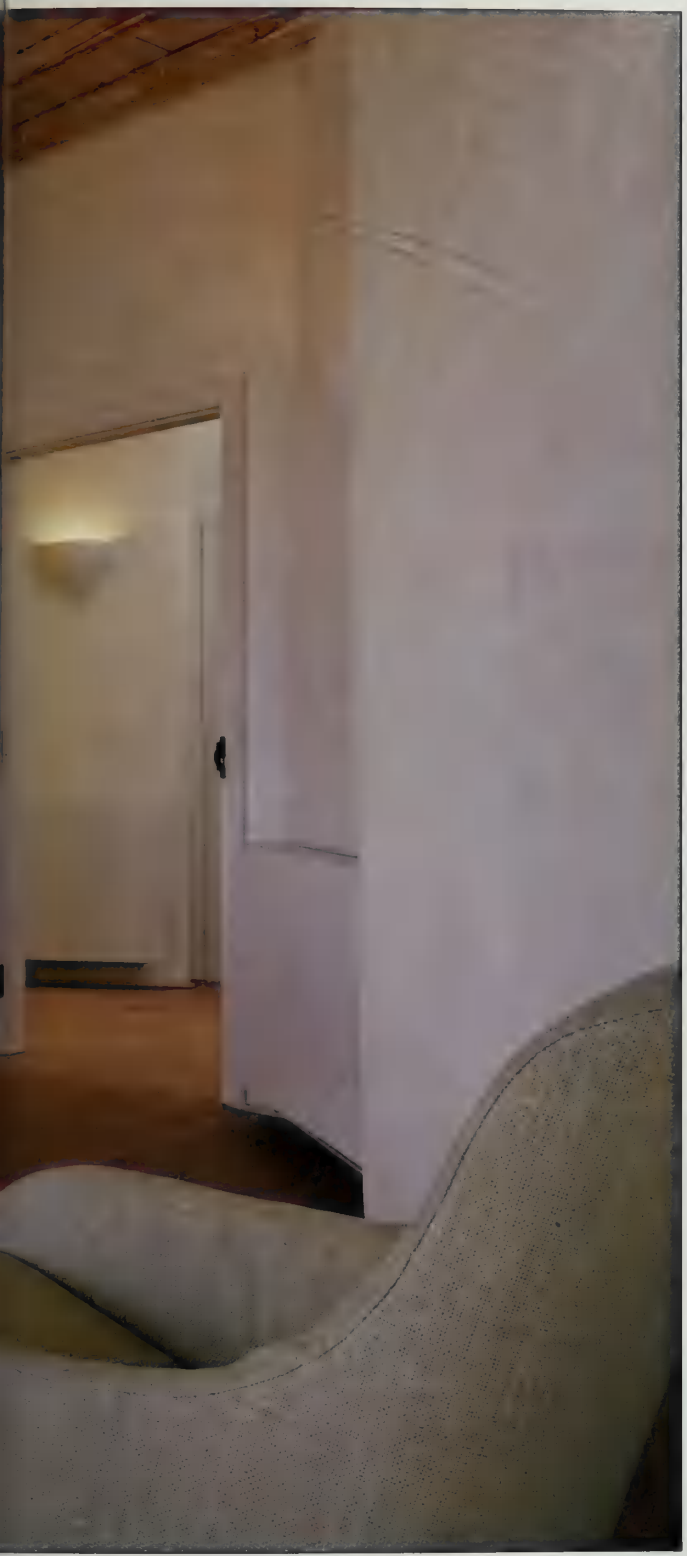
To further diminish the division between the natural surroundings and the built landscape, Barba incorporated age-old materials and tra-

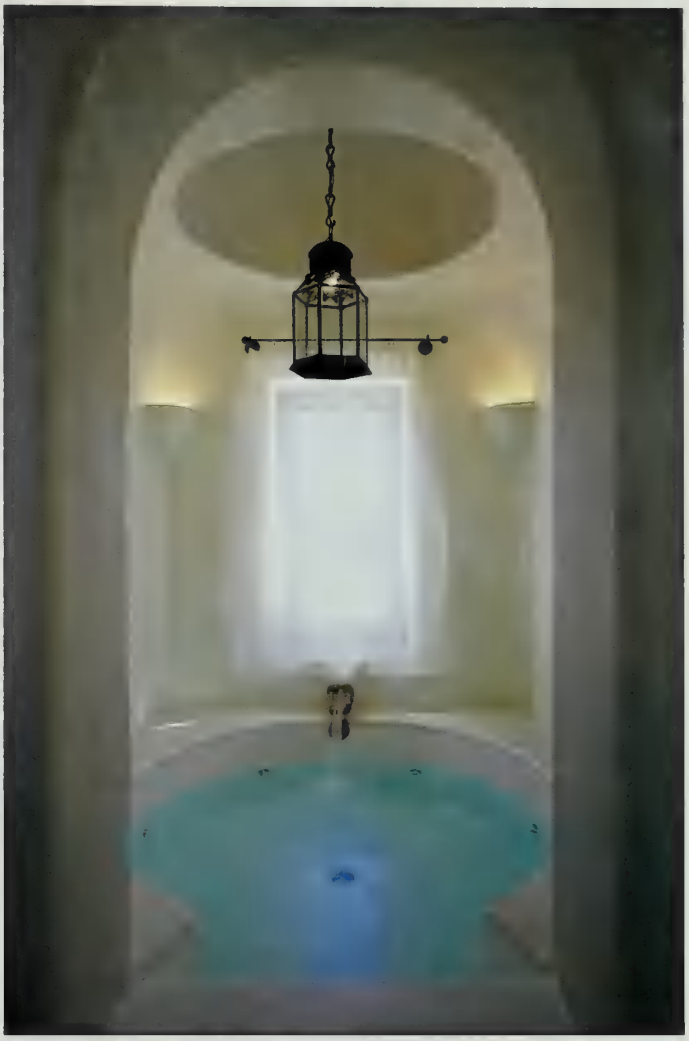
The split-level living and dining area is unified by maple floors and neutral-colored contemporary furniture, which set the tone for the rest of the house. Wood niches from a Greek church were adapted as frames for the mirrors.



In the master bedroom, chestnut beams were whitewashed to give an aged appearance. The lanterns, by Andrea Branzi, and the plaster sconces built into the walls provide diffuse lighting. The iron-and-maple bed was designed by Christian Liaigre.

ditional effects throughout. All of the walls were finished in plaster by Greek craftsmen and bear the smooth edges, variable textures and sculpted recesses that are so often found in the island's vernacular. Whitewashed chestnut beams trace the ceilings, and the floors are of a uniform Italian maple. He used a pale, amber-colored marble from the neighboring island of Tínos around the periphery of the floors in the kitchen. "The Tínos marble proved to be so appropriate to the setting that the Greek artist Kirios Criton, who worked with me on a number of interior details, designed the sinks in the master bath to be hewn of the same stone." The only moderately contemporary material is the stainless steel that he employed for the surfaces in the kitchen. "With the exception of very few modern details," says Barba, "the house could







ABOVE RIGHT: The master bath was conceived as a contemplative space. Barba designed the sunken tub, of cement plaster, and the faucet, made of rock from the island of Tínos. "At night, from this window, you can see the moon rising and reflecting on a nearby lake," he says.

RIGHT: The dressing area of the master bath opens onto a field of wildflowers. Local artist Kirios Criton designed the marble basins, which were fashioned by craftsmen from Tínos. The marble floor, with a similar rough texture, was also hand-carved.



EUGENIO PONS/COURTESY JAVIER BARBA

have been built two or three thousand years ago."

Rather than divide the public areas with walls, which would have reduced the natural light, he left the entrance hall, living area and contiguous dining area open and unconfined. He defined the dining and living areas by setting them on two levels and sculpted a half wall, a pillar and a banquette in order to further delineate the spaces without closing them off from one another.

The furniture, including pieces by designers such as Christian Liaigre, was chosen by Molly Tsirigakis and Kirios Criton. These elements are noteworthy for their simplicity and the natural hues of the woods and fabrics, which also blend well



with the warm-toned walls, painted a very light beige. Otherwise, there is little to clutter the space. The doors, which were rescued from abandoned villages, refurbished and set in clean, contemporary thresholds, are among the few antiques. "I wasn't interested in a house that would highlight antiques, works of art or even my own architecture," says Barba. "Here, it's the outside world, the landscape of sea and raw, jagged rock that is the protagonist."

It is just that concern for an architecture of equilibrium and harmony that makes Barba's houses so inviting. They are, in a very real sense, therapeutic. "Architecture can never overshadow nature, nor should it try to," he says.

"Better to work with nature, draw from it and let it enter our living spaces in a positive, even poetic way." To emphasize his point, he recounts having charted the sun and the moon over the Tsirigakis property before work on the house began.



He made his calculations, labored over the orientation of the house and planned the placement of the windows with painstaking precision. "If you're bathing in the master bath and gazing from the window at the appointed hour, you'll see the moon rising over a lake just outside," Barba reveals, "and that moment is priceless."

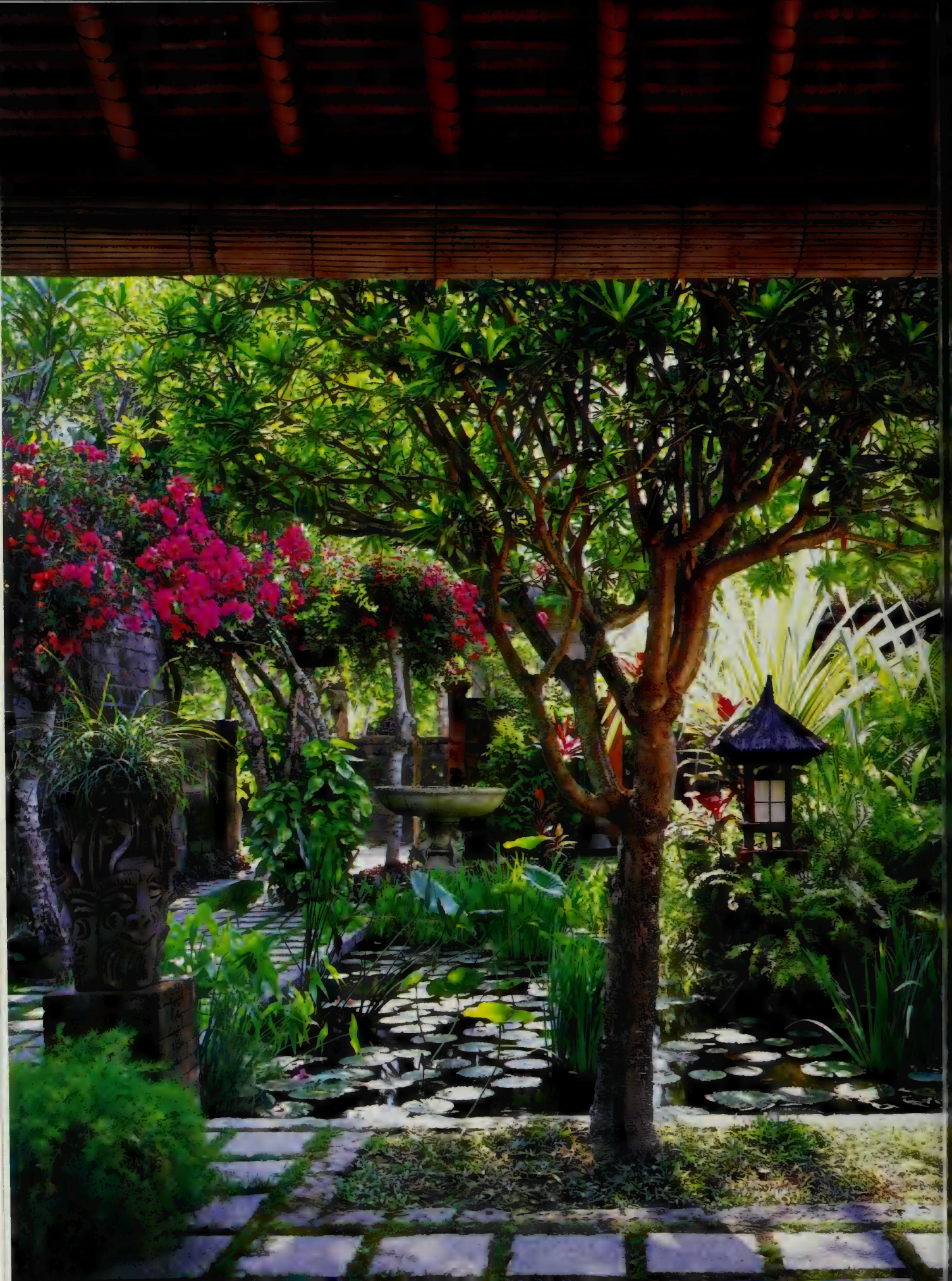
As Barba was finishing the residence, he received a visit from two local architects. They said, he recalls, that it was their architecture but with a contemporary spirit. "They realized that they didn't have to search elsewhere for an architectural model; it was right here on their island."

On his last visit to the Tsirigakis house, he found a flock of sheep, the Aegean views and the *meltemi* blowing hard, although where he was standing in the entrance patio, protected by the exterior walls, there was scarcely a wisp of wind. An artist was just completing a finely wrought mosaic in the patio's slate surface; the image, designed by Barba, was, appropriately enough, of a lizard.

"It seemed only fitting," says the architect, remembering the reptile that he had spotted on the site months before. And then, out of the corner of his eye, he caught a glimpse of a real lizard, lounging in the sun atop the formation that appears to burst from the walls to the right of the front door. "He was back," says Javier Barba, "and in that moment I knew the house was a success." □

ABOVE: Terraces and decks make up half of the house's plan. "The only thing my client told me was, 'I'm going to live outside, so a shaded area is important,'" says Barba. OPPOSITE: The pool faces the Aegean. Iroko wood was used for the deck and the lounge chair.

"To build responsibly in the landscape should be the architect's first consideration," says Barba (left). The Barcelona-based architect has built in several southern European countries and believes the Mediterranean coast shares a language of forms.



Interior and Landscape Design by Michael White
Text by Petra Carroll
Photography by Tim Street-Porter

A BALINESE LANDSCAPE

VILLA BEBEK PAYS HOMAGE TO A DESIGNER'S ADOPTED HOME



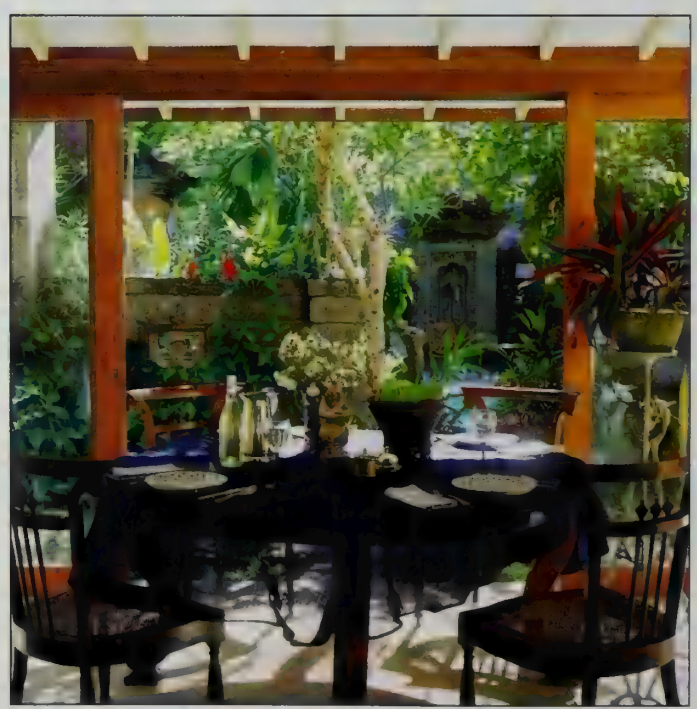
"My work is a multidimensional permutation of Balinese courtyard architecture," says landscape designer Michael White, known as Made Wijaya. LEFT: The entrance court's ornamental garden in his compound in Sanur "welcomes with visual and olfactory splendor."

ABOVE: One of Villa Bebek's nine pavilions contains the open master suite, which sits above a Balinese pavilion that White modeled on a village audience hall. The 500-year-old tablets are boundary stones from the island of Sumba; at right are statues from Sumbawa.

Michael White is the bad boy of Bali, an impish Australian who sailed in on a leaking thirty-five-foot ketch in 1973 and went native.

Twenty-five years and a name change later—he is known on Bali as Made Wijaya—White is the island's foremost landscape designer, celebrated for his signature "tropical Cotswold" gardens and for an approach he describes in a single breath as

ABOVE: "I won the gray-and-white vase in the living room in a tennis tournament on Mustique, partnering Basil Charles against Linda Garland and Mick Jagger," says White, whose projects have included gardens in the Caribbean. Sofa pillow fabric from Jim Thompson.



LEFT: White commissioned the dining table and chairs from Javanese designer Jaya Ibrahim. OPPOSITE: A pair of early-19th-century temple gate guardian statues from a coastal village in north Bali stand on a 20th-century Chinese apothecary chest in the study.

"commando style" and "couture design." His best-known gardens are at Amandari, the Bali Hyatt in Sanur, the Bali Oberoi and the Four Seasons Resort Bali at Jimbaran Bay. But it's the gardens at his private compound that, like "giant swatches of fabric," have spawned his ideas.

White's Sanur compound is typical of the irreverence that has gained him notoriety on Bali. He named it Villa Bebek (meaning "duck") as a pointed commentary on the scores of fancy houses with fancy names that are rising on the once remote island. And in designing the nine pavilions and twenty-five courtyards, he embraced a dizzying range of colors and provocative styles.

But Villa Bebek has its share of reverence too. Its "encrusted and convoluted ruinscapes" pay open tribute





White used the 18th-century legong statues in the master bedroom, which he calls the bridal suite, as the basis for the ten-foot-high versions that he placed in the gardens of the Four Seasons Resort Bali. The pots once carried vinegar and condiments from China.



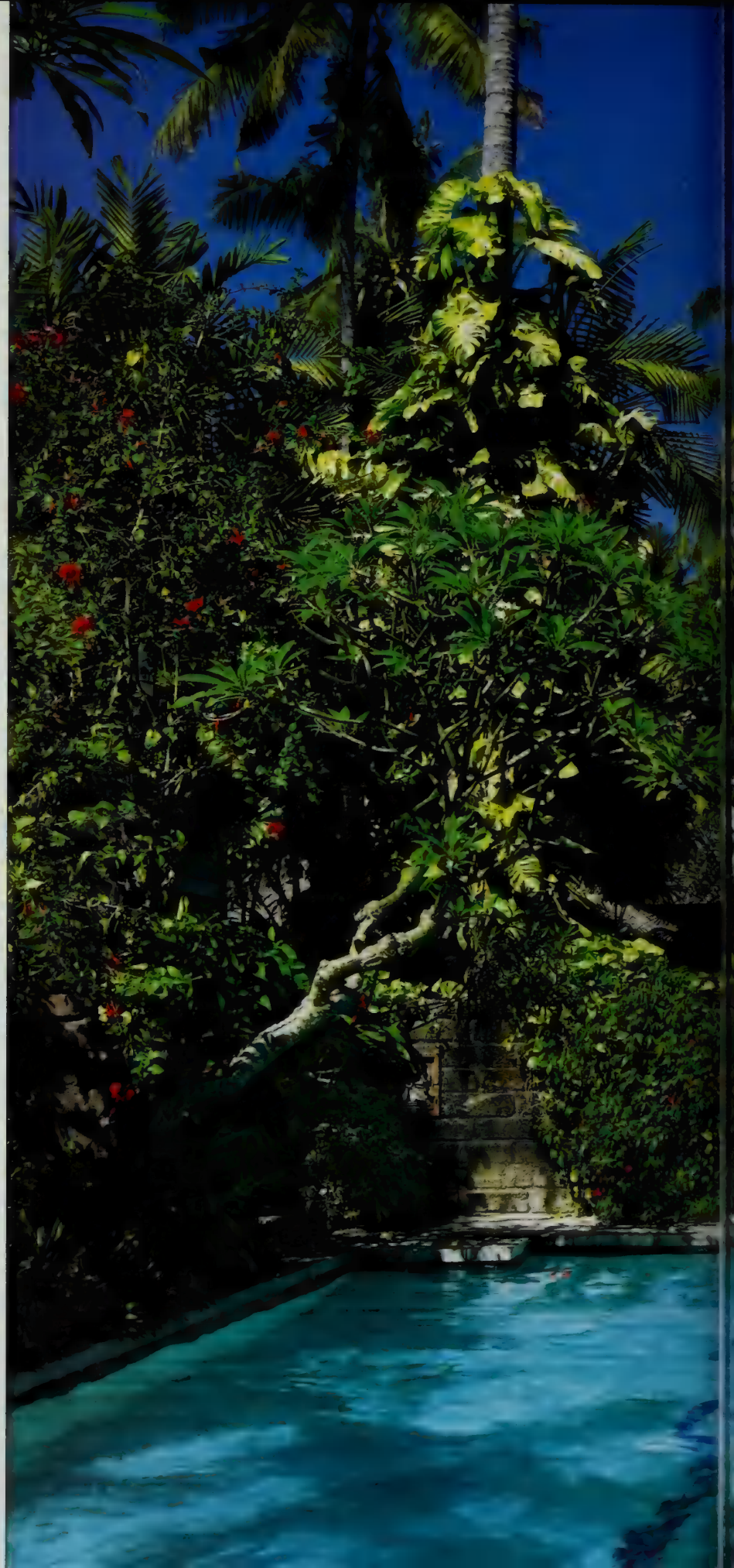
to the Hindu palace and temple gardens that White has frequented for over two decades and to his years of "looking across a courtyard through branches and statuary and silhouettes" at traditional homes. "Bali has been my greatest passion and my greatest teacher," he says. "The beauty of the Balinese nature and the ceremony of the people's lives awoke the tropical aesthete in me."

Bali has not been White's only teacher. He praises Sri Lankan architect Geoffrey Bawa for the fluid interweaving of his interiors, architecture and landscape design. He also cites as influences "the vibrant textures and colors in English landscapes" and "an element of unrefinement—like grass growing between cracks in an English garden—which I think is critical to good design."

White constructed the long, narrow compound of 30,000 square feet for an Australian client in 1989. He liked it so much that he eventually took it over, and he now lives and

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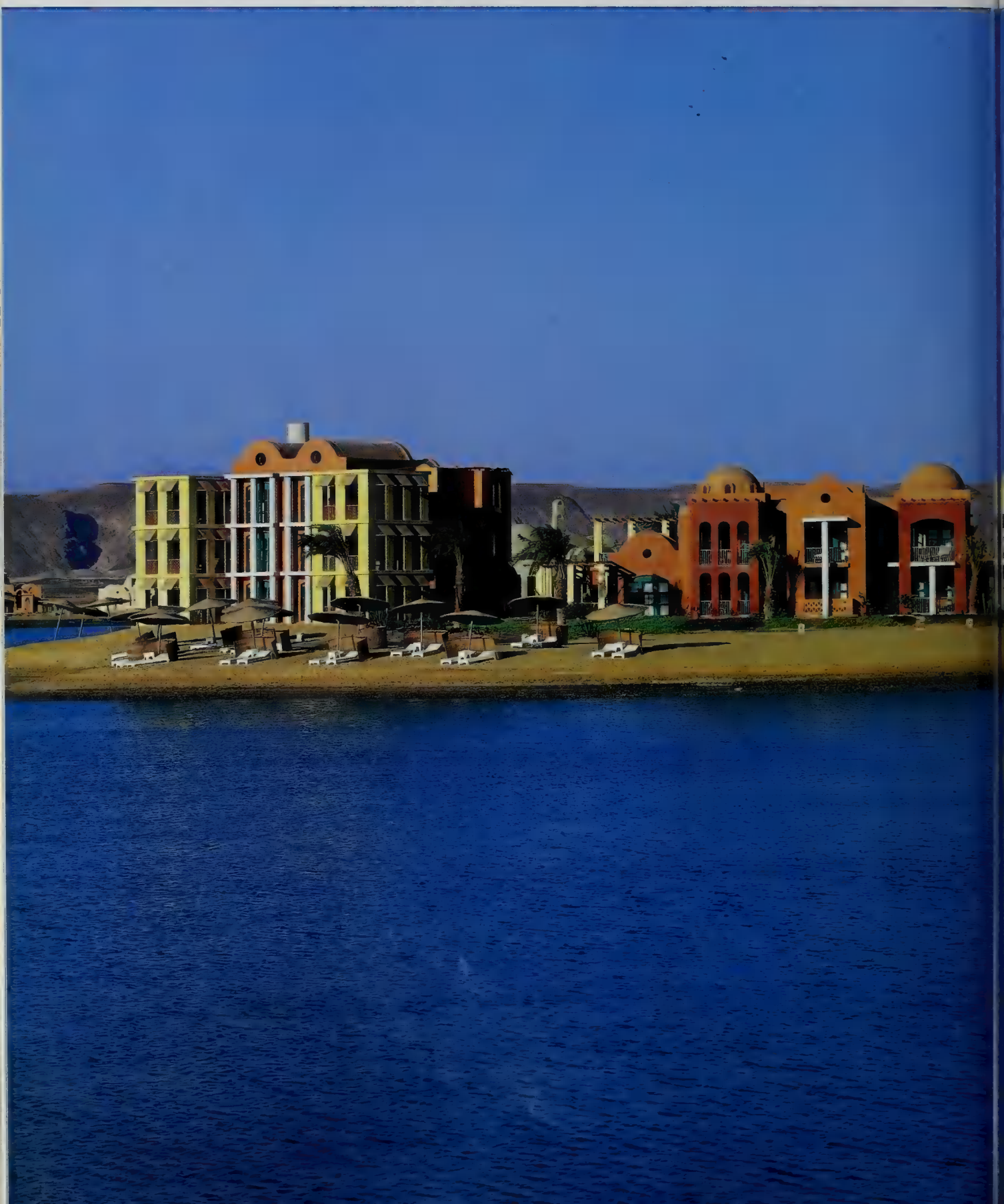


ABOVE: Three naive statues from Sumba stand against a painted window. RIGHT: The swimming pool, with Hockney-inspired lane markers of ceramic tile, is surrounded by plumeria that drops its flowers into the water, honeysuckle, and coconut and fishtail palm trees.



EGYPTIAN MIRAGE

MICHAEL GRAVES' SHERATON MIRAMAR RISES ON THE RED SEA



In El Gouna on Egypt's Red Sea, Michael Graves designed the Sheraton Miramar hotel, adapting vernacular architecture and using indigenous building techniques. "My client wanted vaults and domes, but also abstraction, the simplification that we do," Graves says.



Overlooking a splendid coral reef in Egypt's Red Sea, the resort town of El Gouna was developed to entice the European sun-and-fun crowd away from their usual holiday destination, the south of Spain. Scuba divers go there to explore the sunken ships offshore; strong breezes bring the windsurfers; and the waterskiing is excellent. This coastal spot also attracts vacationers on their way to or from the traditional tour of Egypt —up the Nile from Cairo to Luxor and Aswan.

Until the beginning of this decade El Gouna was a nameless and barren desert, whereas today it is a landscaped oasis shaped by a serpentine network of lagoons and canals that advance and recede with the ebb and flow of the Red Sea. Of the three recently opened five-star hotels, the most spectacular by far is the 334-room Sheraton Miramar designed by Michael Graves, a veritable tourist Xanadu spread out over seven islands.

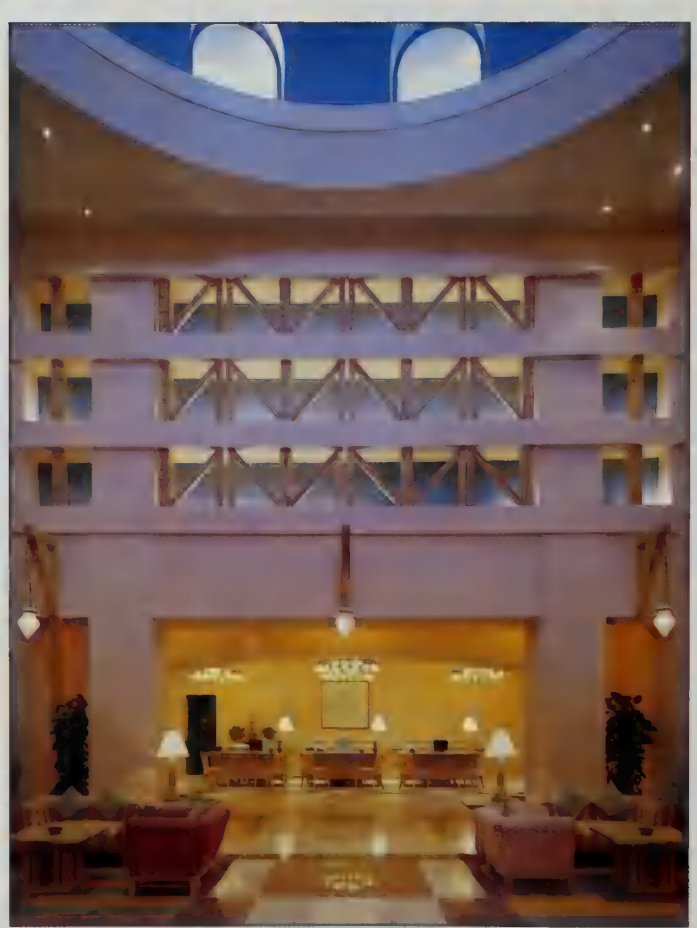
The developer of the hotel, Samih Sawiris, selected Graves after having seen the architect's famous Swan and Dolphin hotels at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. "Sawiris began by asking me what I would do," Graves recalls, "even though I hadn't seen the site yet."

When the two met there, Sawiris took Graves for lunch in a nearby village on a tiny artificial island. Then in its early stage of development, the area consisted of a small hotel, an arcade with a few shops, and some simple residences. These newly completed structures and other housing under way were built with a technique identical to that used for centuries by peasants from Nubia, an ancient region that extended from southern Egypt into Sudan. The walls are made of kiln-baked bricks and topped with brick domes and barrel vaults. The roofs were not, as is common during construction, supported by wood posts and formwork. Instead they were shaped by layering and attaching bricks so that each course leans against the one next to it as the vault or dome expands across the void. This vernacular building craft, virtually abandoned, was revived in the mid-twentieth century through the work, writings and teachings of the noted Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy. The village, in fact, was designed by two of Fathy's disciples, architects Rami El Dahan and Soheir Farid.

During his first visit there, Graves was amazed at the skill and rapidity with which the handmade domes and



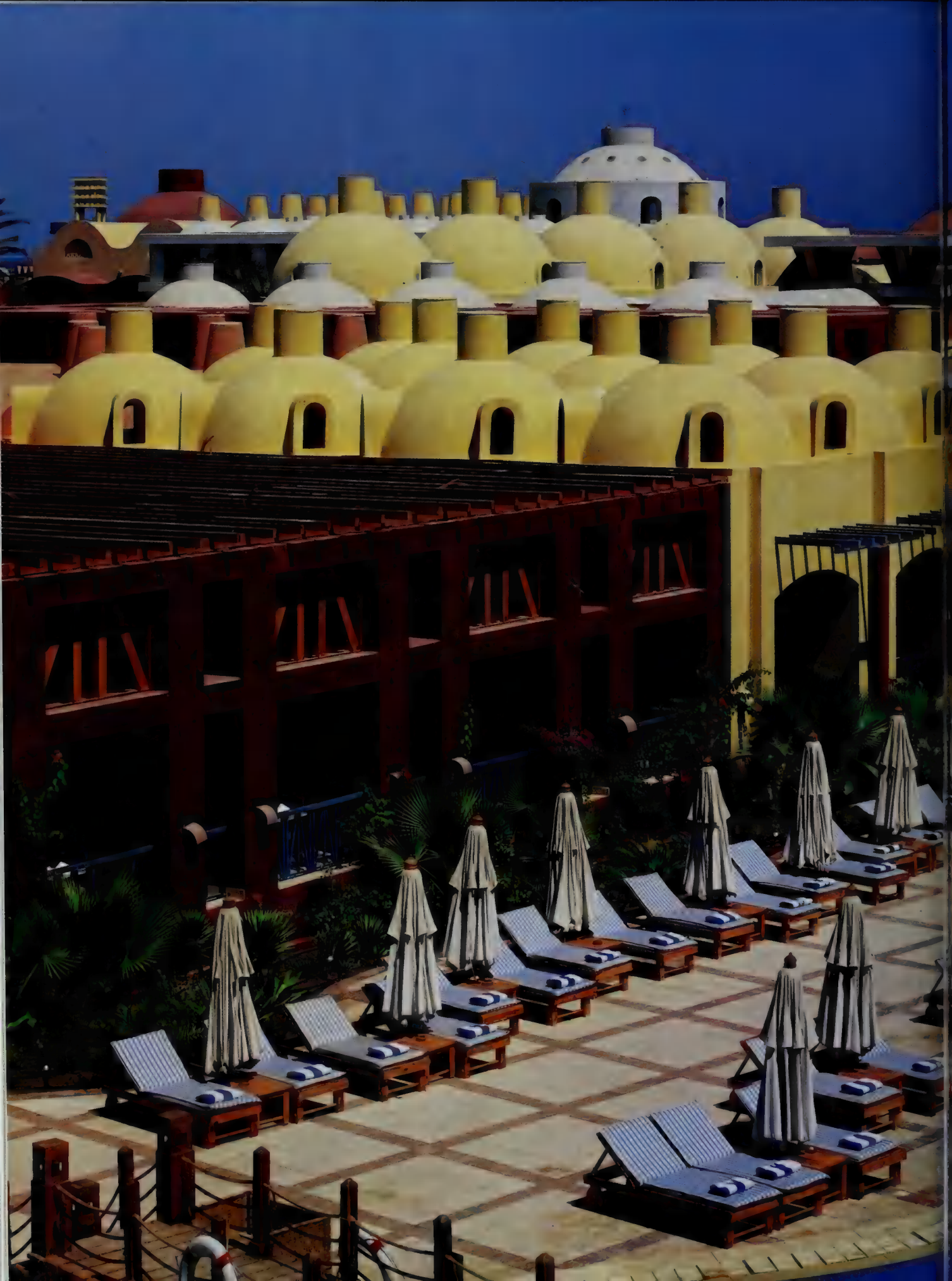
LEFT: The Miramar's reception building features a mix of open and shaded terraces. "I wanted to make the trellises complicated and delicate to contrast with the solid masonry," Graves explains. The pergolas will eventually be covered with bougainvillea.



RIGHT: In the lobby, as elsewhere in the resort, Graves designed the furniture, carpets and lighting and had everything crafted locally. The textile patterns are evocative of folk rugs. The room has a 40-foot domed ceiling and floors made of Egyptian stone.

OPPOSITE: At the main bar, a wall of backlit niches—a scaled-up version of those found in traditional Islamic houses—holds bottles and glasses. The blue-glass lamps are a Graves design "in the character of the place," the architect says.









Brick, laid using ancient techniques, was the primary material throughout. ABOVE: A gateway bisects a guest room arcade and frames a view of a private beach.

vaults were erected. "Two men do them," he says. "One is the hod carrier who brings the bricks and mortar; the other lays the brick." Graves realized that the speed and economy of the process, compared with using reinforced concrete, would facilitate and enhance what he does best—invent a playful and endlessly varied aesthetic full of references to the past. For the Miramar, this was to be Egypt's Nubian vernacular combined with pharaonic monumentalism.

Fortunately for the architect, Sawiris supported the concept. Better still, Graves reports, "he didn't want me to make Hassan Fathy buildings, he wanted me to make Michael Graves buildings through a filter of Egyptian construction." To help Graves understand the local building techniques, Dahan and Farid

LEFT: Graves's vocabulary of domes and truncated pyramids animates the clusters of rooms. Guests may sleep under an exposed-brick dome or a barrel vault, with clerestory windows allowing in filtered sunlight or an oculus revealing a patch of blue sky.







joined Graves as associate architects. It was determined that everything that could be quickly and inexpensively constructed of brick by local masons would be of that material. Only the cylindrical columns, supports for the larger domes, and the floors would be of reinforced concrete.

An ingenious site plan was devised to allow every window, porch and balcony to overlook sea, lagoon, canal or garden. Some guest rooms

TOP: The Presidential Suite was designed with a domed roof and a trellis for shade. "The sun has such an effect on these buildings that we had to make them a little darker so they would fade to these colors," explains Graves, who used pigment integral to the plaster throughout.

ABOVE: The domed ceiling in the suite's bedroom is circled by half-moon alabaster windows. RIGHT: The living room opens onto a private pool deck and the Red Sea. Prints of Matisse's paintings *Vase with Two Handles*, 1907, and *Polynesia —The Sea*, 1946, hang on the walls.





are arranged in one-, two- and three-story clusters along curvilinear, fingerlike wings that follow the contours of the canals and lagoons. Others are positioned to form a circle around a lagoon and fountain, project from an oval plaza like spokes in a wheel or surround and enclose the hotel's pools. All single-story and top-floor guest rooms and porches are roofed by domes, barrel vaults or truncated cones and pyramids, some with rectangular or cylindrical tubes that admit shafts of light. "Once you've been under an Egyptian vault or dome, you want to use that language, and we did," Graves explains.

The hotel's reception area, principal bar and restaurant open onto a curved terrace with an unimpeded view of the sea. These spaces, unlike the asymmetrical mix of guest room clusters, are noble in scale, formal and grand.

The architect and his team designed the furniture and carpets and chose the fabrics and the art, including many prints of Matisse's late work. Sawiris insisted that all the furniture be made in Egypt. He advised the architect to keep it simple because, since it would be made locally, it was bound to be rustic. "We made the furniture crude, as requested," Graves says, "with all the knotholes showing, but nevertheless we gave it a level of sophistication that we like." He designed the light fixtures as interpretations of lamps he found in nearby markets.

Graves believes that the hotel is an architectural success because he wasn't rigid or doctrinaire in the way he went about it. "I tried to design a hotel that could be built well locally, since this is the only way you can come close to making a place that people from Italy and Germany are going to like." But he did much more than that. Pharaonic art and architecture dominates Michael Graves's language of forms. His love of the style, which lasted with little change for over three thousand years, has enabled him to adapt and transform its vocabulary with the highest degree of originality, inventiveness and wit, creating, at El Gouna, a pleasure palace that delights and amuses. □

"As the site plan changed, we varied the forms to give lagoon, pool or garden views," says Graves. ABOVE: A group of guest rooms faces a lagoon, which rises and recedes with the tide. "Here, kids can come out in little rowboats," the architect adds.

"ONCE YOU'VE BEEN UNDER AN EGYPTIAN VAULT OR DOME, YOU WANT TO USE THAT LANGUAGE."

OPPOSITE: In the evenings, guests may stroll in the moonlight or enjoy cocktails on *Samir II*, a boat bar docked on a lagoon. "If you're coming to Egypt from London for ten days, let's say, you'll want a wonderful place to stay," says Graves. "You'll want magic."

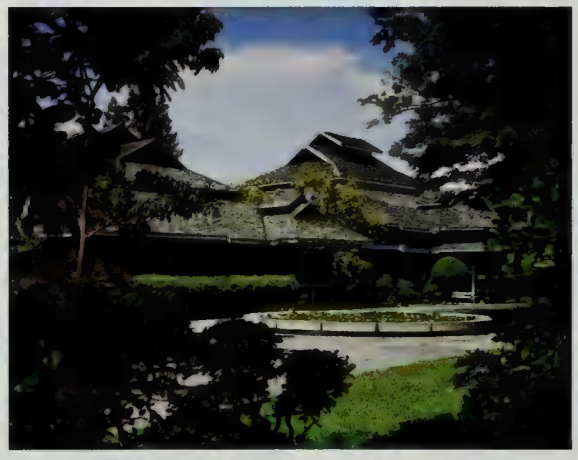




Text by Carol Lutfy
Photography by Jaime Ardiles-Arce

PAST AND PRESENT IN BANGKOK

A RENOWNED THAI HOUSE CELEBRATES GENERATIONS OF CONNOISSEURSHIP



The art and antiques, amassed over three generations, make up one of the finest collections in Bangkok. But they are no match for the house itself—two handsome 6,000-square-foot teak buildings, the floors constructed without the use of a single nail.

Nai Lert, an enterprising Thai businessman, commissioned the residence in 1915. Even then it was noted for its unusual Burmese-style roofs, huge teak tables and plank floors and exquisite tropical garden. "It was elegant, but not in a classically Thai way," says Nai Lert's daughter, Thanpuying Lursakdi Sampatisiri. "There was no other house quite like it."

Eighty-four years later there still



ABOVE: Binich and Thanpuying Lursakdi Sampatisiri's family residence serves as a refuge of surprising quiet in downtown Bangkok, Thailand. The private quarters are at left. RIGHT: A covered bridge connects the house's two teak buildings.







isn't. Kept in enduringly high style, the estate today is unquestionably Bangkok's most famous private residence, concealed within a snarl of skyscrapers, dreary office buildings, and hotels in the downtown Ploenchit Road area. Though Nai Lert died in 1946, the house remains home to Thanpuying Lursakdi and her husband, Binich; their daughters, Peg and Pag, grew up there. "The longer I live here, the more intrigued and amazed I am by my father's vision for the house," says Thanpuying Lursakdi, a former minister of communications, who inherited her father's passions for architecture and gardening. "It's a house that was built to accommodate large social gatherings, and yet it has a quiet, meditative soul."

Nai Lert designed the house himself as a sanctuary for his family and friends from Bangkok's traffic and noise. It was completed in the 1920s and consists of two simple elevated open-air pavilions capped with multitiered roofs. The veranda of the rear building was converted into bedrooms to accommodate a growing family. He dug a private canal for his boat and filled the garden with palms, ferns, orchids and water lilies. The family took up permanent residence in 1927.

Born in 1872, Nai Lert was a shrewd



Thanpuying Lursakdi (top) has lived her entire life in the house that her father, Nai Lert, designed and commissioned. OPPOSITE: A Chinese rosewood chair, carved in the Louis XV Revival style, stands on the veranda before an antique Thai painted cupboard.

ABOVE: Thai silk covers the walls of the formal dining room. The Italian still lifes, the gold-and-black-lacquered Thai screen, the pair of French vases and the English porcelain attest to the three generations of the family who have collected objects from all over the world.

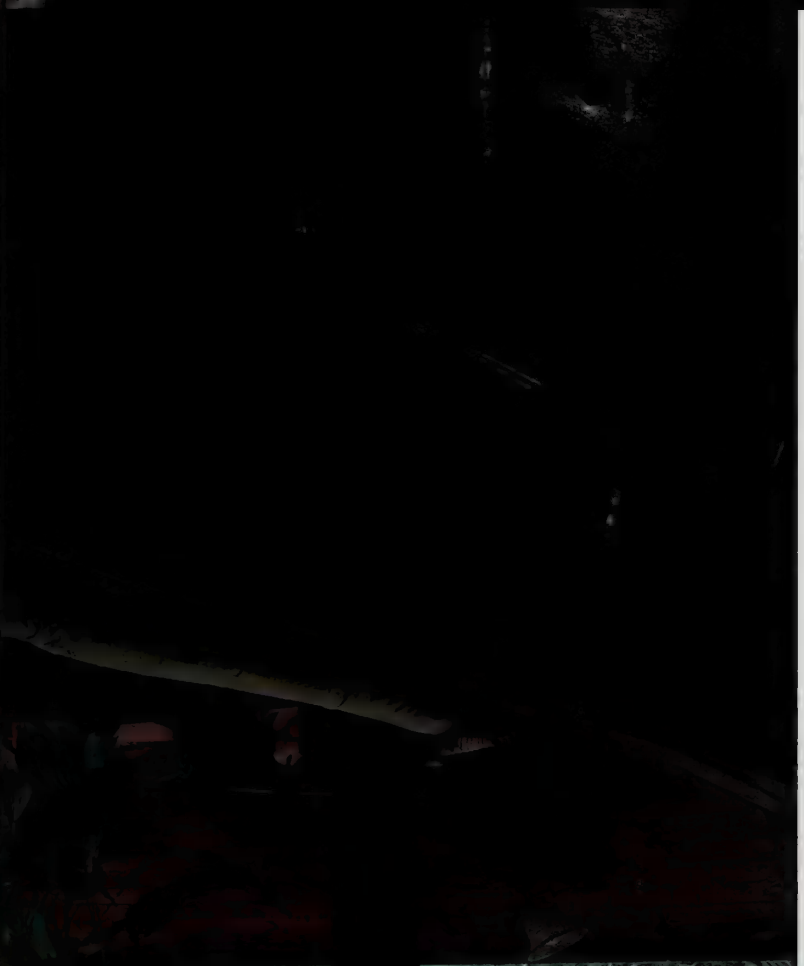


and dynamic businessman who pioneered public transportation and real estate development in Bangkok. He was a maverick who loved animals—he raised two leopard cubs as pets—and adored plants, cultivating one of the lushest gardens in the city. He was also a philanthropist with an optimistic nature that pulled him through successive hardships during World War II, including the bombing of his house (one of its buildings had to be reconstructed).

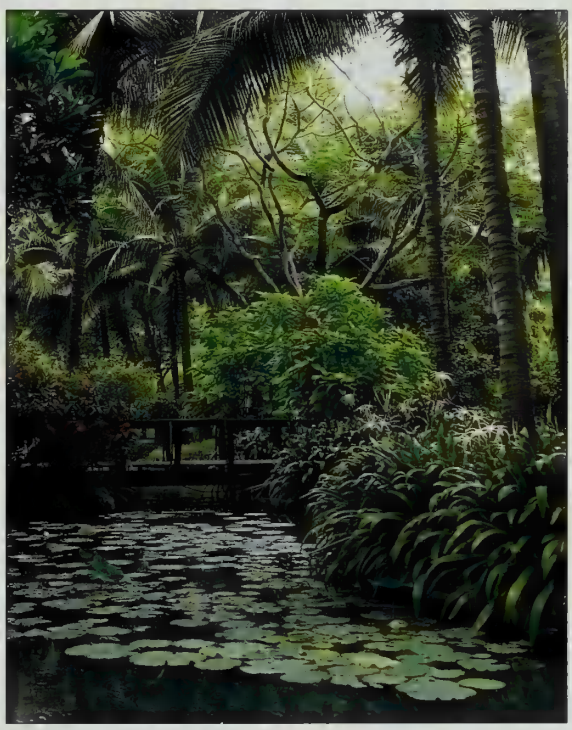
His first big business break came in 1894, when he was hired as a clerk in the soda water and soft drink section of the Singapore Straits Company. Made a partner that same year, he started a store of his own, introducing novelties such as sewing machines, soda water and Shell motor oil to the public. Later he opened a guesthouse that offered English beer, Scotch whiskey and homemade sausages. The menu was so exotic that even Rama VI stopped by for lunch.

It wasn't until he was in his forties, however, that Nai Lert made his boldest

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LEFT: Stairs lead to one of the many seating areas. The sloping eaves offer shade from the sun and protection from the rains. Palms grow in giant rice bowls, which were once used in alms-giving ceremonies. ABOVE: Lush gardens blanket much of the five-acre compound.



ON THE COAST OF CAREYES

MEXICAN MODERNISM INFORMS A CLIFFSIDE RESIDENCE OVERLOOKING THE PACIFIC

Architecture by Duccio Ermenegildo/Text by Hunter Drohojowska Philp
Photography by Tim Street-Porter

For a musician's cliffside residence in Careyes, Mexico, architect Duccio Ermenegildo created sculptural spaces that "accentuate curves, both in the architecture and in the details." The shallow curve of the swimming pool, he says, "reinforces the sensuality of the house."



BELOW: An independent open-air structure houses the living and dining areas. Brick walls were finished with a cement compound to appear stuccoed; the roof is palm thatch. "I wanted to respect the materials, colors and philosophy of Mexico," Ermenegildo says.





One of the wonderful things about Careyes is that it has a purity and uniqueness of style that is very rare in modern developments," says architect Duccio Ermenegildo, who lives part of the year in the tiny beach community. Perched on a bluff overlooking the Pacific coast, between Manzanillo and Puerto Vallarta, Costa Careyes is the site of at least a dozen of the most distinctive homes in Mexico. This efflorescence of inventive building began after 1978, when such Mexican architects as Marco Aldaco and Diego Villaseñor started fusing indigenous materials with modern design.

This architectural history both intrigued and challenged Ermenegildo when he acquired a long and narrow lot on a cliff with an ocean view. "Careyes-style architecture is born out of local cultural traditions and the need to adapt to local conditions," he says. "The climate makes it possible to live outdoors year-round, so all common areas of the house are open to the elements. Adobe is no longer used, but the concrete walls are still made very thick for insulation. Huge *palapas*, or palm roofs, also reflect vernacular roots." La Quebrada, as he calls the house, is Spanish for *ravine*, a reference to nearby topography.

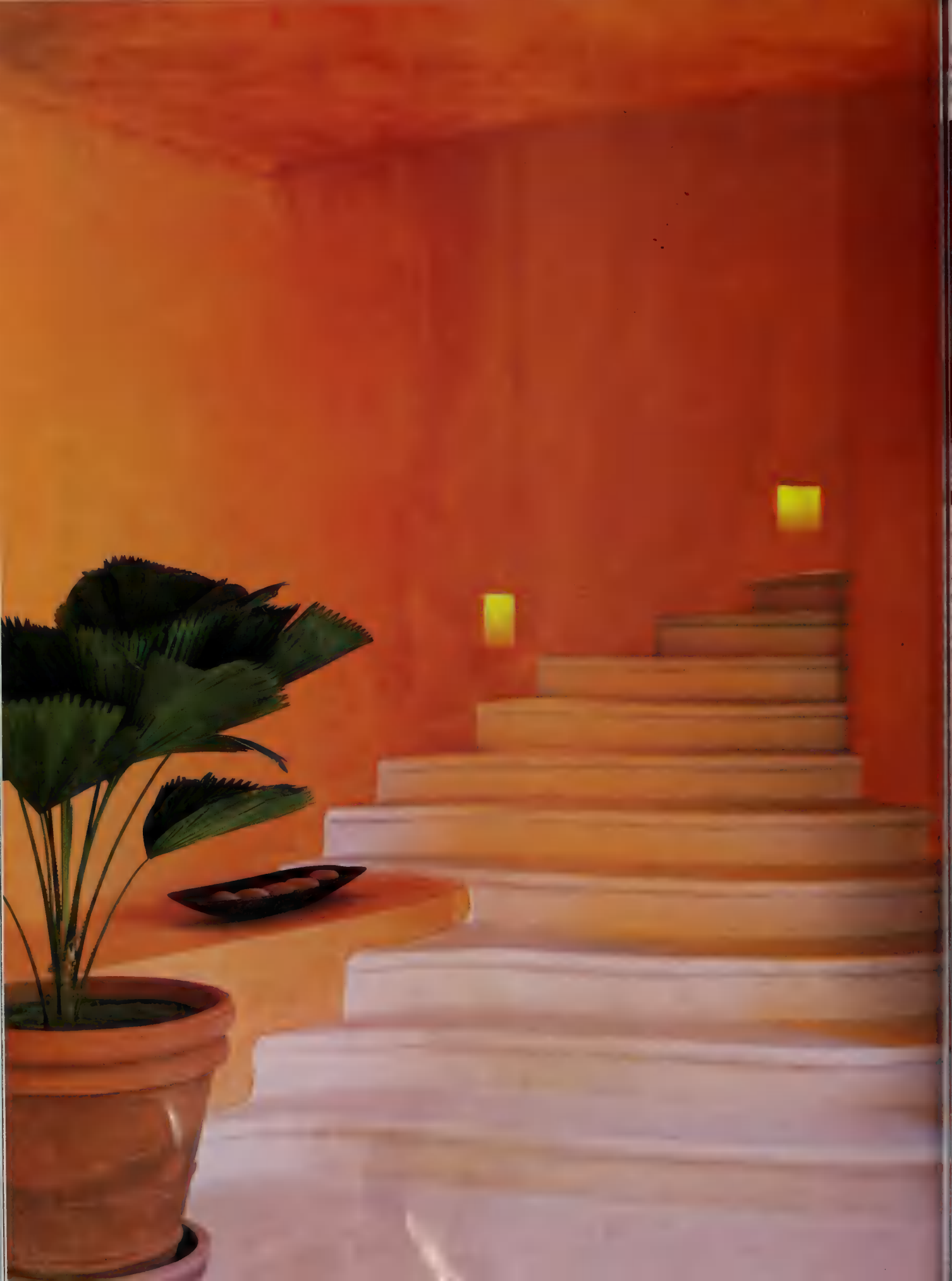
Ermenegildo, who is based in Manhattan, is an admirer of the architecture of Tadao Ando and a student of trends in contemporary sculpture. Drawing on the work of Aldaco, Villaseñor and



LEFT: The walls in the dining room, as throughout the structure, are an orange that was mixed by Ermenegildo and a local painter to reproduce the shade of the flower from the dwarf poinciana tree. The table is the architect's own design.

The living area's banquette and side tables, shaped out of concrete, "are integrated into the architecture," Ermenegildo says. The patio, made of granite, marble and cement, was poured, then chiseled by hand. "It's a labor-intensive process that creates a superb ridged effect."





OPPOSITE: A stairway leading to the master bedroom is illuminated by wall lights inspired by Luis Barragán. BELOW: "Because the weather is so warm, the bedrooms are the only enclosed spaces of the house," says Ermenegildo, who built a separate two-story structure for them.



Manolo Mestre, he brought a modernist rigor to the massing of forms and the streamlining of space without losing the essentially sybaritic intention. "My dream was to marry minimalism with exotic local materials," he says. A popular rock singer, impressed with Ermenegildo's design and infatuated by the acoustics provided by the thick walls, purchased La Quebrada as a retreat from Los Angeles. He has since commissioned Ermenegildo to build a recording studio, a spa and a master suite on an adjacent lot.

Although Ermenegildo arranged the house around the 2,000-square-foot living and dining areas, which are shaded by a thirty-six-foot *palapa*, he wanted it to feel intimate, even cozy. To generate such an effect, he relied on illusion. Like a chambered nautilus, the house coils in upon itself. The grand central space is approached indirectly, via an entrance corridor of curved walls, a piazza with a square fountain and a palm-lined stairway. "I wanted there to be a sense of discovery," he says. "The curved walls hide the view until you reach the piazza. Then you see the house in its entirety as well as the view, with its succession of blue pool, blue sea and blue sky —a variation on a theme in different shades and textures.

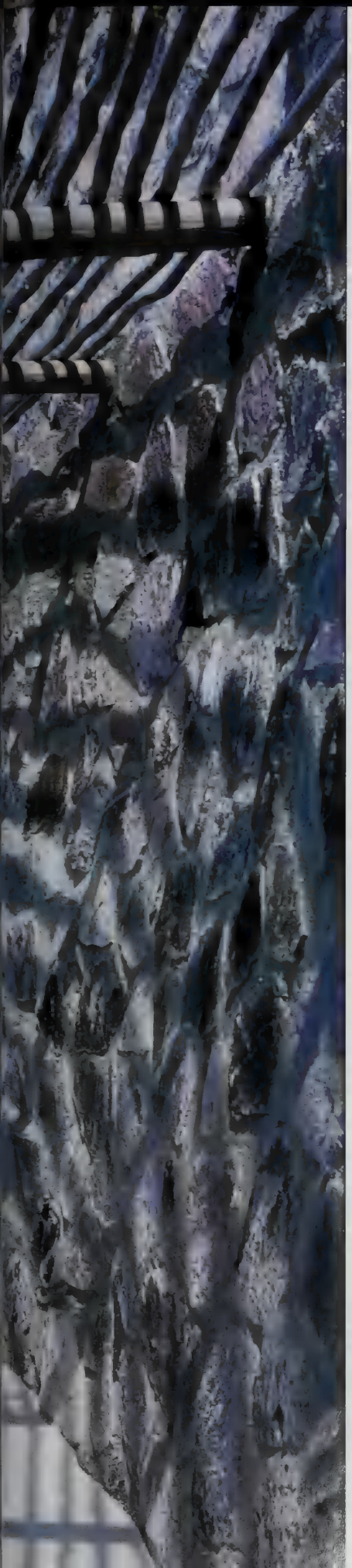
"A house is like a sculpture in that it evolves and takes on a life of its own with every element that's added. You always have to be sensitive to that special angle from a window that will give you a lovely view of a particular rock." The unconventional forms, from stairs to banquettes, are molded out of cement.

The curved pool is bordered on one side by a twenty-foot stone retaining wall. "The pool creates the effect of a mirror of water floating three inches above the level of the patio. I wanted it to act as a *trait d'union* between the



RIGHT: "I didn't want anything to be a reminder of manufactured objects," explains Ermenegildo, who molded a guest bath from cement—"a noble and versatile material," he says. "The luxury of the house is that it's hand-built." Fieldcrest towel.





"CAREYES-STYLE ARCHITECTURE IS BORN OUT OF LOCAL CULTURAL TRADITIONS."

house and the sea and the sky." The serpentine line of the sixty-five-foot pool is echoed in the undulating steps linking the patio to the main living area. "The house is above all sensual. There are many curves and rounded edges that define its overall look."

Ermenegildo built the bedrooms in a separate, enclosed structure, connected to the living and dining areas by an outdoor staircase. The two guest bedrooms are on the ground level, fronted with a pergola made of a tropical wood called *guayabillo*. The master suite is on the top floor, reached by an orange stairwell.



While the exterior and the public areas are painted the warm orange of the dwarf poinciana flower, the bedrooms are bright white plaster. Within them, the architect emphasized the views or the sculptural properties of the house itself. There is no artwork because it would be ruined by exposure to the elements. "The idea was to keep things simple, functional and easy to remove when the occasional hurricane comes along."

Ermenegildo conceived the interiors in a style that he calls "rustic minimalism." Throughout, banquettes are built into the rooms. Most accessories and fabrics were sought out in various regions of Mexico. Pillows are covered in handwoven cottons from Telas Tipicas in Mexico City; dishes were handmade in Michoacán; and terra-cotta pots came from Guadalajara. Many of the tables and chairs were designed by Ermenegildo and made by local craftsmen out of mahogany or other tropical woods, such as *parota* and *barcino*. He also designed much of the hardware for the house, including fish-shaped door handles, which were fabricated by a craftsman in Mexico City.

Capacious baths have deep tubs made from a mixture of powdered marble, granite chips and white cement that is sanded and waxed. "Each bath is unique, but all are spacious," he says. The kitchen is outfitted for a gourmet. "It's the only kitchen in Careyes where people like to hang out," he boasts.

Although Mexican culture has been the primary influence on La Quebrada, Ermenegildo cites his childhood summers in Positano and Amalfi as contributing a Mediterranean softness to his design. "I will always remember walking along the stairways and alleyways under the vine-covered pergolas, which I tried to reproduce on the walkway to the guest bungalow."

In the graceful harmony of modern forms with softened edges, inviting surfaces and startling hues, the house offers a warmth uncommon in a 7,000-square-foot residence. "I hope," says Ermenegildo, "I achieved something both intimate and spectacular." □

LEFT: "The passageway was inspired by walkways in Positano and Amalfi," remarks Ermenegildo (above). "The vines will eventually cover the pergola, but not to the point of eliminating the play of shadows, which create wonderful abstract patterns on the walls."

FOLLOWING PAGES: The architect joined the pool patio to the living area with curved stairs that repeat the contour of the swimming pool. He also designed the lounges. The ceramic pots are from Tlaquepaque, as are the wicker chairs and table in the living area.





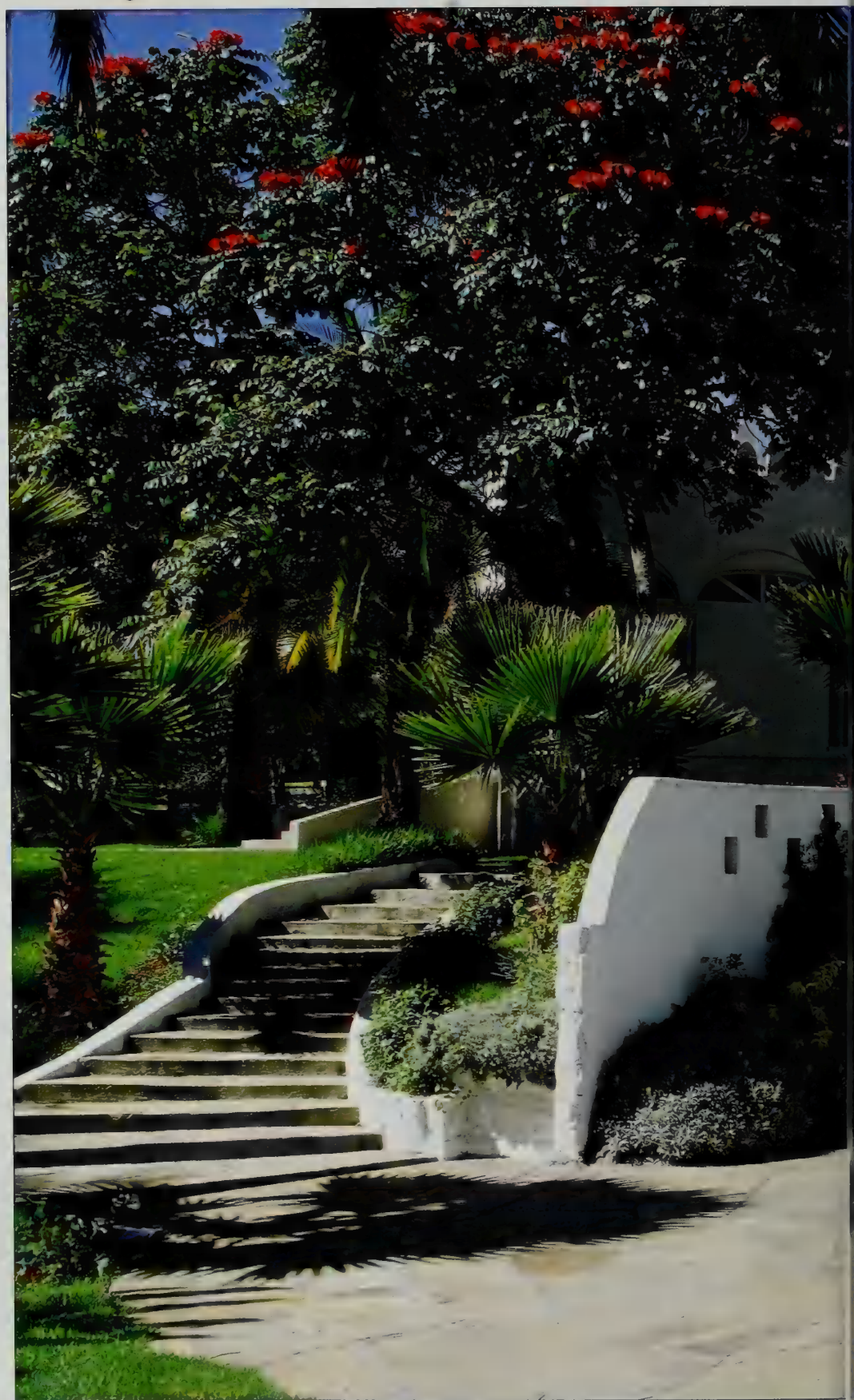
KENYA'S DJINN PALACE

Tales of immoral antics and high society in a fairy-tale castle in Africa seem far-fetched. But the Djinn Palace, on the shores of Lake Naivasha in Kenya's Great Rift Valley, has such a story to be recounted, one that fascinates to this day.

Completed in 1927 by Major Cyril Ramsay-Hill, a rancher, the house was constructed in a Moorish style, based on his grandmother's house in Seville, Spain. Compared with the austere gloom of most settler architecture, it was a complete fantasy—"a house of haunting beauty," as James Fox, author of *White Mischief*, called it—as were the characters who were to inhabit the exotic residence.

The property, known as Oserian—meaning "place of peace" in Masai dialect—passed through a number of hands, until Hans and June Zwager bought it in the late 1960s and turned it into an ecologically balanced farm that supports one of the largest cut-flower businesses in the world.

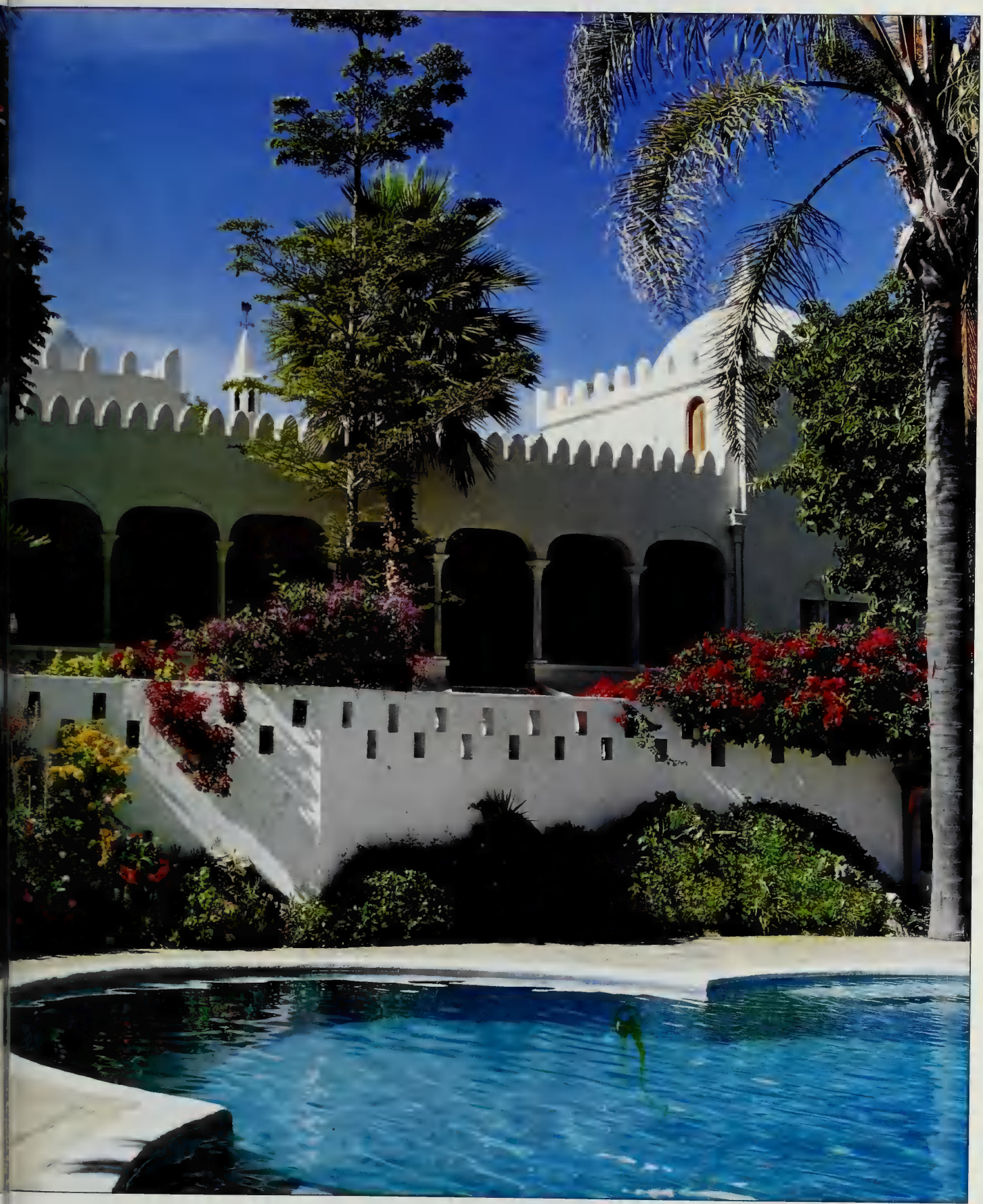
Back in the 1920s, though, no such concerns for the land existed. Kenya was still an untamed territory where the vast majority of settler farmers were responsible, hard-working folk. For a handful, however, who had more money than sense, it became a playground. The Happy Valley crowd, as they became known, had few morals, drank



The Djinn Palace, built in 1927 by Major Cyril Ramsay-Hill on the shore of Lake Naivasha, was entwined with Kenya's Happy Valley crowd. Hans and June Zwager restored the Moorish castle, complete with minaret and dome, and added an arcaded veranda and pool.

PRESERVING A MOORISH FANTASY FROM THE HAPPY VALLEY ERA

Text and Photography by Tim Beddow



too much, played too hard and overindulged in any form of stimulant they could lay their hands on.

The crenellated mansion, complete with minaret, soon was dubbed the Djinn Palace and became a well-known watering hole of the thirsty Happy Valley set, though Major Ramsay-Hill eventually grew bored with all the "unwelcome guests who began drinking immediately after breakfast." More serious was the infatuation of his wife, Mary, with the dashing Joss, Lord Erroll, who was married to Lady Idina. Within two years they had divorced their partners and married and were living at Oserian, spending days riding polo ponies and partying the evenings away. Ramsay-Hill left Kenya in 1928 to pursue an acting career in Hollywood.

Twelve years later, in November 1940, Sir John Henry "Jock" Delves Broughton arrived with his ravishing bride, Diana, thirty years his junior. They tried to rent Oserian from Lord Erroll but were rebuffed. Instead, Diana began an affair with



A portrait of Mary Ramsay-Hill, who later became the countess of Erroll, hangs in the living room. In an inglenook is a copper fire hood installed by June Zwager, who redid the interiors with furniture and fabrics from London and Nairobi. The door leads into the bar.



THE HAPPY VALLEY CROWD HAD FEW MORALS, DRANK TOO MUCH AND PLAYED TOO HARD.

him. On January 24 of the following year Erroll was found dead in his car, shot in the head. His murder remains unsolved.

Broughton, who was the prime suspect, was acquitted of the crime, but he and his wife were shunned by Kenya society after the trial. The couple did, however, manage to lease Oserian, and Diana promptly fell for Gilbert Colvile, a wealthy, reclusive rancher. Within six months Jock and Diana had broken up, and at the end of that year, after failing to lure her back, Broughton committed suicide at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool.

In January 1943, only a month later, Diana married Colvile in Nairobi, returning to Oserian the same day. But the story doesn't end there—a decade later Diana was in the arms of Tom, Lord Delamere; she moved out of the Djinn Palace in 1954 and divorced Colvile in 1955. Colvile continued to live there until his death in 1966.

A Nairobi syndicate then bought the property with a view to turning it into a small hotel, and Hans and June Zwager were invited to join. "I had always been interested in interior design, so they asked me along to have a look," says June Zwager. "We weren't really that keen on Naivasha to start with. It was the sort of place we came to on the weekend to go on our boat. Of course, we'd gone





LEFT: "When we bought the house in 1967, it was a mess and very old-fashioned," says June Zwager. "We closed off one side of the courtyard to build the dining room." She designed the furnishings and the colored-glass insets and had them made in their on-site workshop.



"The previous resident of the house was Gilbert Colvile," says June Zwager. "He lived very simply, like a Masai, in one room. He was a blood brother to the Masai—he was revered by them." ABOVE: A bedroom contains a chair and chest from the island of Lamu.

through the long grass to investigate this crumbling old place that I thought at first was a mosque."

The hotel venture didn't work out, but in the meantime, the enterprising Zwagers had set up an import company. "In the beginning," recalls June Zwager, "it was very simple—we were selling toothpaste and toothpicks." Within a few years they were representing products by Bayer, DuPont and Chevron. "Our chemical business allowed us to take a risk," explains Hans Zwager, so they purchased Oserian in 1967. June Zwager still thought the property could be turned into an exclusive hotel (despite the lack of tourists), and she began to rebuild it.

The main living room was restored, as was an Art Déco bar decorated with hand-painted tiles by an Italian craftsman. The exterior was left the same, "except for the new kitchen and dining room at the rear," says June Zwager. Two and a half years later they moved in. Initially the ghosts of the 1920s and 1930s characters still seemed to haunt the rooms. Life for the Zwagers was no reflection of those days—they had to find a way to make the farm pay.

RIGHT: June Zwager, who calls herself a "professional amateur or amateur professional architect," kept the Spanish tiles, which had been brought in by Ramsay-Hill, when the courtyard was renovated in 1974. He based the design on his grandmother's house in Seville.

A chance visit from a Dutch flower importer led them to start growing the statice plant, which was in huge demand in Europe. The couple overcame the problems of air-freighting, sales and distribution, and the business thrived—over a million stems a day are currently sent abroad.

The Zwagers' main objective is to operate in harmony with the environment and with the people they employ. "Environmental awareness is vital for our future and therefore our success," says their son, Peter Zwager. "It's commonsense, educational and has a lot to do with our love of the land."

The Oserian success enabled them to incorporate the neighboring estate of Kongoni. The Kongoni Game Sanctuary was created, and it has allowed the birds and game to flourish. "Instead of destroying the wild animals that destroyed our crops, we put up fences, leaving corridors and ancient paths that the animals could continue to use unimpeded," says Peter Zwager. Huge reforestation programs—up to thirty thousand trees a year—have been activated.

The realization of Hans Zwager's dream of "flowers living in harmony with wildlife" is an achievement that the Zwager family is justifiably proud of. "Although our farm no longer impacts the land negatively, we're still not perfect," says Peter Zwager. "But we care, and it can be seen." □



The Zwagers, who operated coffee plantations in the 1960s, turned 3,000 acres of farmland over to growing flowers. They now run one of the largest flower-export businesses in the world and employ some 6,000 people. ABOVE: Pots of carnations await grading.







SPIRIT OF JAVA

A DESIGNER'S RETREAT DRAWS ON HIS INDONESIAN ROOTS



Architectural and Interior Design by Jaya Ibrahim
Text by Carol Lutfy
Photography by Tim Street-Porter

Filled with references to his family and culture, designer Jaya Ibrahim's house in Bogor, outside Jakarta, "juxtaposes the hopes and achievements of my predecessors with my own hopes and achievements." A courtyard's palm trees suggest the columns of a Javanese pavilion.







After many years in Europe, Ibrahim decided to build the house he shares with his mother (right, with the designer) in order "to celebrate the past before making any move into the future." ABOVE: The sofa in her living room is Biedermeier style. Photos of Java flank the doorway.

It was the magnificence of Mount Salak that originally attracted Indonesian designer Jaya Ibrahim to Bogor, a provincial city about sixty miles south of Jakarta, in 1992. A few years earlier he had bid at auction on—and lost—a nineteenth-century painting depicting an elaborate wedding procession through the fields surrounding the mountain. "When I finally decided to move, I remembered the painting and thought to myself, Wouldn't it be nice to have a view like that?" he says.

Ibrahim, who was educated in England, worked in London as an assistant to designer Anouska Hempel for several years before returning to Jakarta in 1993. After living abroad for nearly two decades, he had gained "the distance to see Indonesia objectively and appreciatively," he says; and he was struck by how much of its cultural heritage the country had lost. "I was very concerned then, as I am now, with Indonesians' indiscriminate acceptance of anything Western at the expense of our own cultural heritage," he explains. An attempt in 1992 to visit a renowned eighteenth-century plantation house near Jakarta reinforced that concern. "The house had been torn down a



week earlier," Ibrahim says. "Eventually they built a shopping mall on the site."

This lingering sense of loss informs the designer's weekend house in Bogor, which is his mother's full-time residence. The brick-and-concrete manor-style villa comprises 8,600 square feet and twenty-two rooms. Its central block contains the living room, anteroom and dining room; on either side of it are private quarters in pavilions looking out onto interior courtyards. Part Javanese, part European and part Ibrahim family legacy in origin, it is a house "where the past is celebrated and where lost causes find their place," he says. "To a large extent the house is built on memories, some of

The octagonal dining room is "literally the heart of the house," says Ibrahim. The batik-patterned, polished cement floor was inspired by memories of his great-grandfather's house. The cabinets, chairs and sideboard, all teak, were designed by Ibrahim's firm, Jaya & Associates.



THIS PAGE: Sumatran and Thai celadon pots from the 18th and 19th centuries, originally used to store preserved fruit, are assembled on a 19th-century Javanese kas in the study. On Ibrahim's desk are a pair of limed terra-cotta pots.

OPPOSITE: Four late-18th-century Javanese doors make up a screen in the designer's bedroom. The batik bedside table cover was handmade by his grandmother. "Walking through the house, I feel the presence of my ancestors," he says.



RIGHT: Porcelain Ibrahim amassed while living in Europe rests atop a turn-of-the-century Madurese jackfruit-wood cupboard in a bath. "The design on the cupboard is meant to ward off evil spirits," he says. The mirror, framed in hammered brass, is 19th-century Sumatran.



them accurate, some of them probably not."

Ibrahim adhered to several traditional Javanese principles in designing the villa. Its three entrances are strategically located in the western, northern and eastern façades to represent fortune, intellect and charity, respectively. In the front courtyard, he planted forty-four coconut palms on a grid, each intended to conjure up a column in a traditional *pendopo*, or open pavilion. A dramatic interior courtyard is filled with empty scallop-edged pots on a bed of small stones—his interpretation of the "sea of sand" landscape once prevalent in local palaces. "Javanese architecture is not as much about material and form as it is about the organization of spaces and their relationship to each other," he says.

The house quotes from European sources as well. The main structure employs columns fashioned after Palladio's Tuscan order. The front and back verandas, with their towering doors and carved trelliswork, recall a Dutch plantation house. And an east-facing window, balcony and reflecting pool are an homage to Venetian Gothic architecture. "The window embodies a lot of Islamic influences," Ibrahim notes. "When I was constructing that façade, villagers wandered by to ask if I was building a mosque."

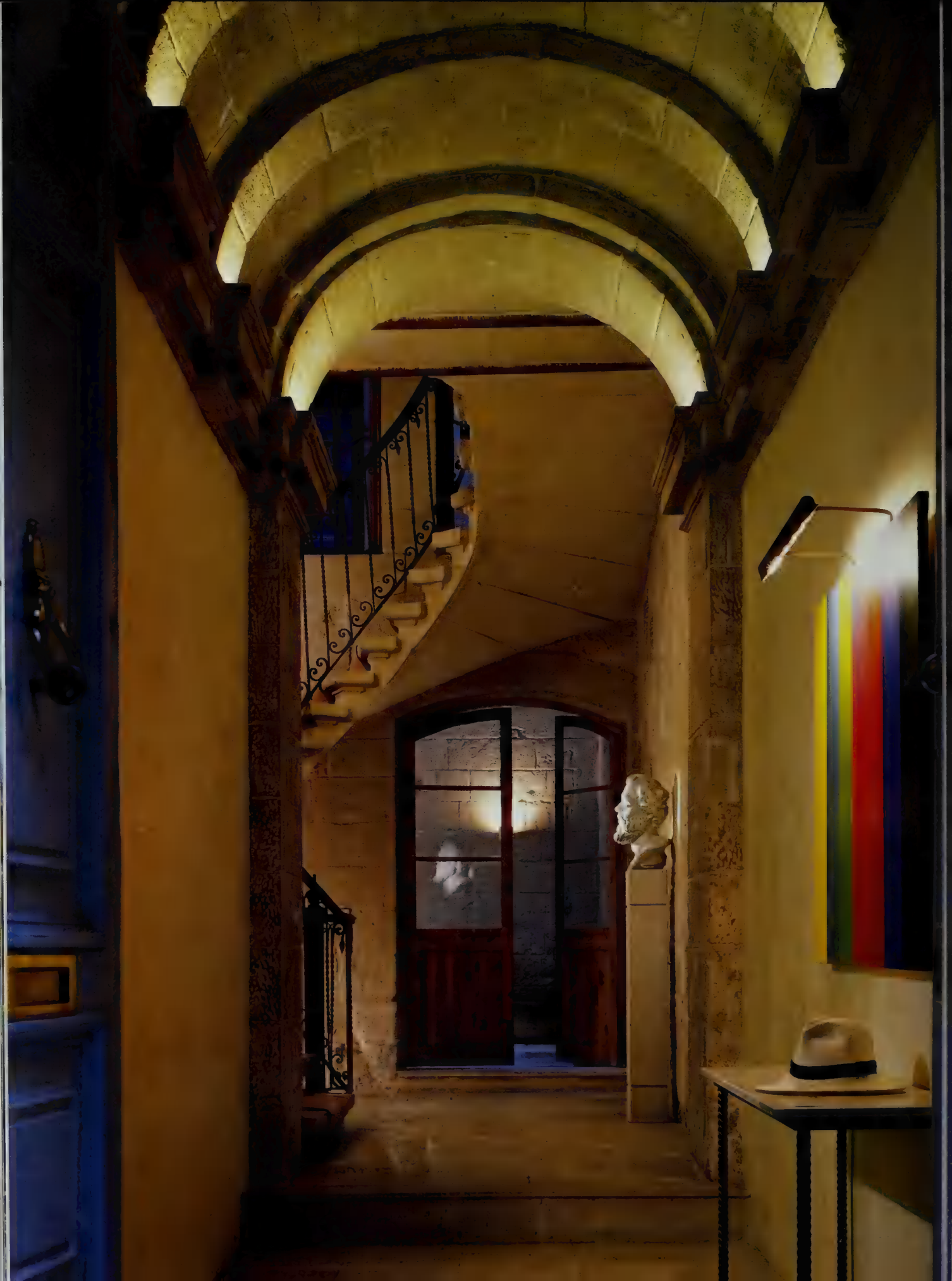
The house is, above all, a personal testimonial for Ibrahim: a disparate mosaic of his travels throughout Europe, his life in London and his childhood in Indonesia. The long, deep veranda facing Mount Salak culminates in an Italianate loggia with three Neoclassical arches—a tribute to his great-grandfather's house, which, he laments, "we have lost forever." The handsome folding screen on the front veranda, made from five framed leaded-glass panels, was once a set of doors in his parents' house in Jakarta. "There's a Javanese custom that whenever you move, you take a handful of dirt from the old house and sprinkle it in the new one," he adds. "On some level that captures the essence of my ideas."

Indeed, Ibrahim's style is to blend and layer these "bits and pieces from the past" in a way that resonates both personally and aesthetically. A typical room might include Javanese furniture and pottery; Indian, Balinese and Sumatran textiles; English porcelain, crystal and prints; a Chinese rug; and at least one object designed by a family member. (His grand-

continued on page 148

OPPOSITE: Ibrahim drew on Venetian trefoil arches for the design of his study's window, "a shape akin to the Ottoman style much admired by Indonesians, particularly in Sumatra, where my father came from." The 19th-century glass lantern originally hung in a mosque.





MINIMALIST TONES FOR MALTA

ARTISTS RESTORE A SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY STONE HOUSE IN VALLETTA

Text by Roland Flamini
Photography by Scott Frances

A city built by gentlemen for gentlemen" was Sir Walter Scott's description of Valletta when he visited Malta in 1831. The gentlemen in question were the Knights of Malta, the religious order that ruled the tiny Mediterranean island in the sixteenth century and created the walled capital. Remarkably, today's Valletta still retains its original shape, size, character—and its capacity to cast a seductive spell on those who visit it. The narrow streets are lined with the cliff-like walls of stone palaces and houses adorned with carvings and protruding enclosed balconies. Occasionally an open door gives a glimpse of an inner courtyard or the dark interior of a church, where votive candles flicker before gilt saints. At every corner there is a polychrome shrine, a heraldic device or a pilaster or other architectural embellishment.

Most visitors simply return home to show videos and sing the city's praises, but artist Yannick Vu and her husband, sculptor Ben Jakober, took their enthusiasm a step further. Valletta so captivated the British couple that they decided to move there. "There's something otherworldly about Valletta that immediately appealed to us," Jakober says. "The city's quite beautiful and really untouched. Everywhere you look, there's something interesting." Vu believes the island has "a spiritual life and old values that you don't see anymore in Europe these days."

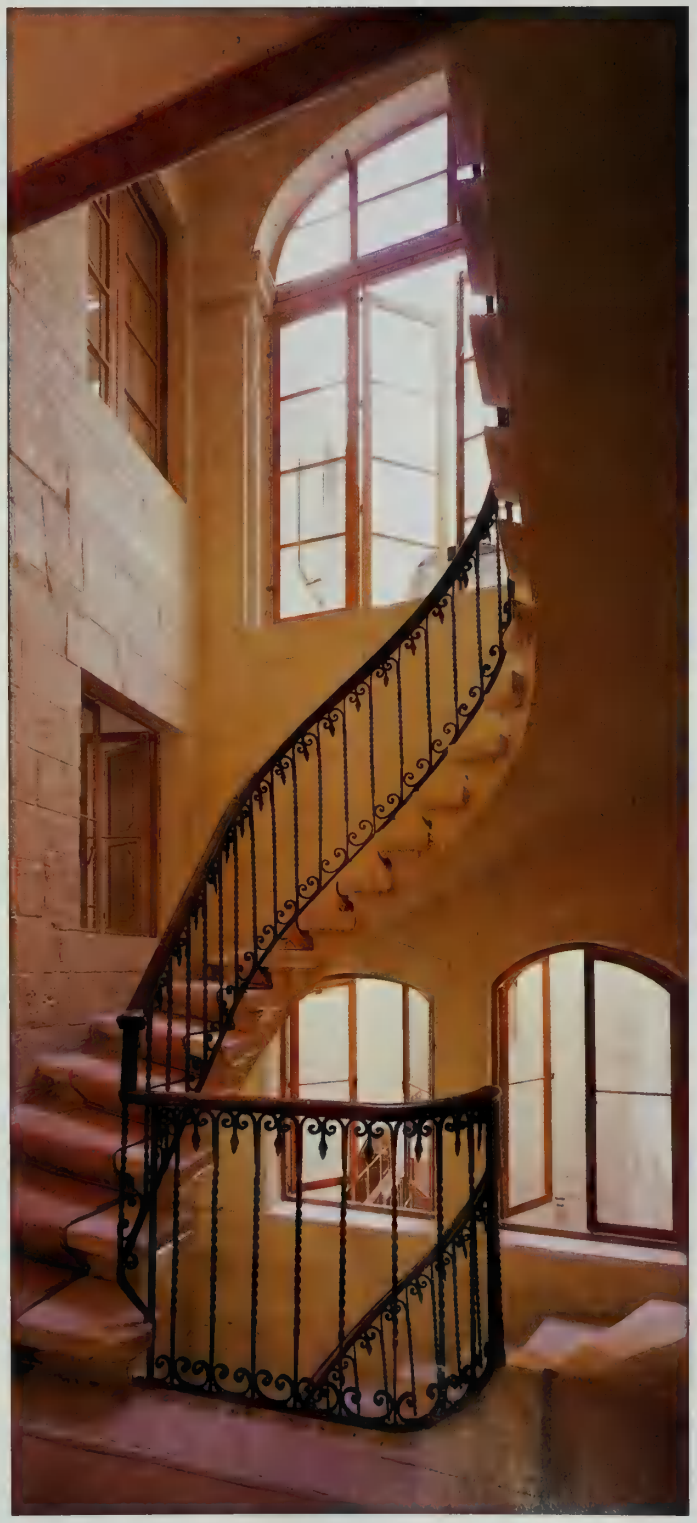
Purchasing the tall, narrow house, which has a small courtyard and two vaulted cellars, was the easy part. The three-floor stone structure had been empty for years and was "in a ruinous state," Jakober recalls. "There was a hole in the roof, and pigeons were nesting in the rooms. There seemed to be thousands of coats of paint and plaster on the walls."



OPPOSITE: Simple stone arches and carved cornices, typical of Maltese architecture, define the entrance hall of the 17th-century residence in Valletta, Malta, that was restored by painter Yannick Vu and her husband, sculptor Ben Jakober. Double doors lead to a courtyard.

ABOVE: A Baroque stone sculpture of the archangel Michael fighting Satan stands at a corner of St. Ursula Street near the heart of the city, which was founded in 1566 by the Knights of Malta. The narrow houses have projecting balconies enclosed by louvers or glass.

THE SOFT LIMESTONE HAS BEEN MALTA'S PRINCIPAL BUILDING MATERIAL FOR CENTURIES.



ABOVE: Supervising architect Wilfrid DeBattista stripped layers of paint from the walls to expose the stone around the main staircase, which was added in the 19th century. Renaissance-style windows overlooking the courtyard are original to the house.

"We were a bit worried that the furniture from our house in Paris would be too modern," Vu remarks, "but we kept the rooms bare, and the pieces complement them very well." RIGHT: The couple added the 16th-century-style mantelpiece in the living room.







ABOVE LEFT: Although the couple modernized the kitchen, they used local materials, such as Malta stone. ABOVE RIGHT: In the reception room, the carved stone table on wheels, a collaboration between Vu and Jakober, displays two of Jakober's marble sculptures. The latticed wood settee is from Egypt.

OPPOSITE: DeBattista installed glass-and-pine double doors in the dining room to admit natural light. The gilt-framed mirrors and the teak refectory table, which was built by a local carpenter, were designed by Vu and Jakober. The chairs are reproductions of pieces by Robert Mallet-Stevens.

Not much is known about the history of the house. It was built in the first part of the seventeenth century, and the street, named after Saint Ursula, was on the original plan for the city, so the property was probably owned by one of the Knights of Malta.

Vu and Jakober recruited local craftsmen, hired Maltese architect Wilfrid DeBattista to supervise the restoration and commuted to Malta regularly "to crack the whip and offer the carrot," as Jakober puts it. "We made few structural changes, but we did knock down a wall in the guest bedroom and create an arch to mirror the existing arch in the room," he adds.

Once the thick encrustations of paint and plaster had been removed from the interiors, the exposed honey-colored Malta stone was so attractive that the couple decided to make it a defining feature of the house. The soft limestone, hewn from nearby quarries and shaped into rectangular blocks about twenty inches long and twelve inches high, has been Malta's principal building material for centuries. On the second and third floors, they covered most of the walls in traditional Maltese fashion, using a thin mixture of sand and cement, then painted them white. The third-floor living room was plastered and painted an eggshell color.

New glass-and-pine double doors in an existing archway lead out to the courtyard and bring much-needed light into the dining room. On the flat rooftop, Jakober and Vu built a summer room, with glass doors that offer a spectacular view of Valletta's busy harbor and the surrounding villages and fortifications.

Old timber beams that were uncovered and repaired; wood doors, shutters and windows that were stripped, waxed and polished; and pine furniture that was designed by the owners and made by a Maltese carpenter reflect the presence of local workmanship. As the project progressed, Maltese decorator Joanna Briffa was approached to supply carpets and fabrics for upholstery as well as useful advice.

The principal floor of the house—the piano nobile—is not the second floor, as in most classical houses, but the third. It includes a spacious living room with a twenty-foot-high ceiling edged with a stone cornice. Vu and Jakober installed a massive Renaissance-style fireplace carved by local stonemasons using methods and tools that have changed little since the sixteenth century. Roman shades filter the strong sunlight that comes in through the long wood balcony over the street. A structure borrowed from Arab architecture, the Maltese balcony once had latticed windows that allowed its occupants to see without being seen; today these balconies have glass windows.

On the same floor are the master







Stone arches divide the guest bedroom into three sections: a sitting area, a sleeping area and an entrance. The red-wool-upholstered rocking chair is by Ron Arad. The metal table and the carved granite lamps are all by Jakober. Maltese designer Joanna Briffa chose the fabrics and rugs throughout.

"THERE'S SOMETHING OTHERWORLDLY ABOUT VALLETTA THAT IMMEDIATELY APPEALED TO US," JAKOBER SAYS.



Views from the terrace, furnished with a 19th-century iron camp bed, take in the Grand Harbor. "It's unspoiled," Vu notes. To the left is an ancient hospital; beyond is the town of Kalkara, which predates Valletta by several centuries.

bedroom, a large dressing room and a study. Below the living room is Vu and Jakober's joint studio, with her walnut easel at one end and, at the other, a carpenter's workbench where they work together on their often large-scale constructions.

The couple's painstaking restoration has probably brought the house closer to its original appearance than it has been at any other time in the past two centuries. The décor takes second place to the architecture. In the master bedroom, the bareness is almost monastic—there is a bed flanked by lamps designed by Jakober, an ottoman and a pair of gray suede armchairs. The living room has just one seating arrangement, composed of two low Japanese red leather sofas and a reproduction of a 1930s sofa by Jean-Michel Frank. In the dining room, the only wall decoration consists of four mirrors in heavy giltwood frames designed by Vu and Jakober. "Yes, the decor is minimalist," Vu admits, "except for a splash of color here and there. We left it very spare because we wanted the quality of the building to speak for itself." □

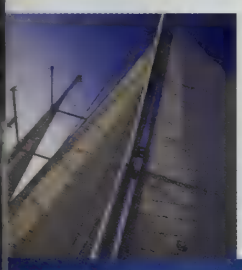


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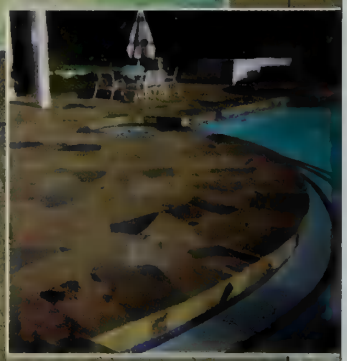
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ON THE COTE D'AZUR

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the Madonna and the eighteenth-century Italian marble bust of a cardinal in the entrance hall to the blue Rothko hanging in the alcove that leads to the library.

Baldwin's touch is most evident in the blue salon, the reception room in the heart of the villa. The walls are painted white, and the sofas and chairs are upholstered in blue linen, save for the Louis XVI–style armchairs, which are covered in a simple off-white fabric. Blue-and-white Chinese porcelain rests on the marble mantel before a gilt-framed mirror.

Before dinner, guests sometimes gather in the long garden room, which was added by the residents. The wife shopped in several countries to furnish it in style—and it took a lot of furnishing. Standing in the center of the room is a late-eighteenth-century table with a marble top set on a base of water snakes. A pair of eighteenth-century gilt armchairs are covered in a green silk stripe. A very fine *console desserte* is by Saunier; Wan-Li lacquered cabinets date to the early seventeenth century. American Impressionist paintings of birds, flowers and fruit hang on the walls.

The designer once said that La Fiorentina's six guest bedrooms had been treated and decorated as though they were master bedrooms. But few rooms can compare with the wife's bedroom, a shimmering space with yellow silk on the bed and chaise, Louis XV gilt fauteuils signed "Gourdin" and a George III cabinet. Exhibited there is her favorite work of art, *The Garden* by Ralph Wormeley Curtis. The oil was once owned by Isabella Stewart Gardner, who bought it in 1884, the same year it was painted in Venice.

The residents entertain almost everywhere in the house, but a frequent spot in summer is the Palladian-style pavilion by the heated freshwater swimming pool (not to be confused with the saltwater pool, in its own separate garden). Used as a summer living room, it is a wonderfully comfortable area, with breezes blowing in from all directions. It is a superb place for a dinner party because the view of the coast and the south of France sparkles at night, and the whole thing is very "south of France."

If this is a dream, don't wake me up. □

A BALINESE LANDSCAPE

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runs his design studio on the grounds. A labyrinth of courtyards, antechambers and galleries is offset by Indonesian architectural elements that he has adapted as backdrops. It's a continuum, with one courtyard melding into the next, shifting from contemporary to primitive, restless to meditative.

White has developed a lexicon of phrases to explain his approach to garden design. He calls himself "part midwife, part sculptor, part engineer," and he terms the gardens "courtyard classic"—a nod to the courtyard traditions in Asia and Europe that shaped them. The focal point is a central court that links the master suite, the swimming pool, the guesthouse and White's design studio. There are also six water gardens, or "passive cooling systems," the most dramatic of which abuts the swimming pool, near the entranceway. Planted with irises, bulrushes, water lilies and papyruses, it blends Japanese, Chinese and Balinese styles.

The nine pavilions mirror the eclecticism of the landscaping. The split-level east villa, housing the master suite and guest quarters, was built with a Balinese pavilion as its base and modeled after a *bale agung*, or village audience hall. Its yellow exterior is accented by a colorful Balinese window by Bali-based Australian artist Stephen Little (who painted most of the decorative walls in the compound). Inside, the master suite is sparsely appointed. The guest bedroom, in contrast, is furnished with an ornate bed from Yogyakarta Palace, in central Java, and with Moroccan fabrics and art. "As Indonesia is the largest Islamic country in the world, I wanted to experiment with Islamic decorative style in a secluded nook of the house," White explains.

Interiors and gardens are constantly changing at the compound. "They're annuals, not perennials," he says. "The built-in benefit of having staff around is that you can pull down a wall, put one up, paint it blue, make a new garden lamp, get a tree up, cut a tree out, create a raised grass platform, a new terrace or a new pond, virtually every day." For Michael White, Villa Bebek will always be a work in progress. His greatest source of pleasure, he says, is "the metamorphosis, the flux." □

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SPIRIT OF JAVA

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mother was skilled at batik, and his mother occasionally designed furniture.) He is a self-confessed compulsive collector—he lived around the corner from Christie's in London and attended auctions every week—whose tastes run toward blue-and-white porcelain, celadon pots and crystal. But his greatest passion is Indonesian textiles—Balinese ikat, Javanese batik, Sumatran *songket*—which he calls "one of the country's greatest arts."

Ibrahim mixes it all up in huge rooms with double-height ceilings, which allow him to cluster and display hundreds of objects and create countless vignettes. He uses his vast collection of prints "as a kind of wallpaper," and he employs color both to unify and to differentiate spaces. The anteroom and dining room are linked by deep shades of green, for example, while his mother's private rooms are characterized by blue and white.

One interesting aspect of the house is the use of cement for garden ornaments, columns, countertops and especially the floors. A harmonizing element in the villa, the floors were actually an afterthought. "They were supposed to be

> Time abroad gave him "the distance to see Indonesia objectively and appreciatively."

Sumatran teak, but it never arrived," Ibrahim explains. "The contractor was about to have a nervous breakdown. *I* was about to have a nervous breakdown. I had to come up with something—and then I remembered the ordinary, polished cement floors of my great-grandfather's house." Rather than leave them plain, he adapted designs from old blue-and-beige Yogyakarta batiks. "I always like to have a reference point, whether personal or historical," he says.

Above all, the house, open to the elements, celebrates Mount Salak and the green Javanese countryside. "I may have lost the painting at auction," Ibrahim says, "but I live with real-life pictures of the mountain." □

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business move, becoming one of Thailand's first real estate developers with the purchase of twenty-six acres in the Ploenchit Road area. He sold off most of the land in small parcels, and he built his house on property he kept for himself. The British government, which bought thirteen acres, erected its embassy next door.

Nai Lert's endeavors in public transportation were equally farsighted. He launched them in 1911 with a fleet of horse-drawn carriages that he made available to well-to-do local residents. When automobiles became more popular, he imported Fiats and rented them out with drivers by the hour, thus inaugurating Bangkok's first taxi service. These efforts culminated in the White Bus Company, which, with a fleet eventually numbering eight hundred, served most of the city. After the company was nationalized in 1975, his daughter and granddaughters decided to undertake a different business entirely: They opened the Hilton International Bangkok hotel in 1983.

Nai Lert was perhaps the most illustrious member of the family, but not the only distinguished one, according to Peg Sampatisiri, the elder of Thanpuying Lursakdi's daughters. Her parents were both high-ranking ministry officials. Her paternal grandfather was the first Thai ambassador to Japan and later served as a minister of the interior and a minister of foreign affairs. And each of her grandmothers was socially prominent in her own right.

Thanpuying Lursakdi remembers the house, above all, for its elaborate parties. "My father loved to entertain. He would sometimes decide on the spur of the moment to hold a dinner for three hundred guests, and my mother would have to go out and buy enough plates, silverware and food," she recalls.

"My mother's mother couldn't read or write," adds Peg. "She dressed in traditional Thai clothing and kept the house in meticulous order. She was a homemaker and a very good money manager who eventually took over my grandfather's affairs. He loved to play host, and she loved to cook. Her cooking was celebrated all over Bangkok, and I have very distinct memories of her steaming dozens of urns of traditional Thai mackerel, which she would give as presents, for days.

"My father's mother, on the other hand, was very close to the royal family," she continues. "She spoke English and had a public persona and life. She attended dinner parties, dressed in the elegant European styles of her day and was very involved in the Red Cross."

In this way, several worlds converged under a single roof, and the interiors bear the mark of their manifold influences. "My grandparents had blue-and-white porcelain from China and owned handwrought silver plates to use as their everyday ware," says Peg. "They commissioned giant brass pots to hold alms for the monks and enormous blue-and-white pots in which to grow lilies. It was a huge house, so everything they got for it was also huge. There was nothing fussy; everything was bought to be used. But there are no longer craftsmen who can make those things, so they've become priceless."

Thanpuying Lursakdi and Binich Sampatisiri's art and antiques collection is more international and eclectic. It encompasses German crystal, English porcelain, Portuguese silver and myriad Thai objects, such as lacquered screens, pottery from the Ban Chiang period and a delicate pastel-colored seventeenth-century cupboard with guardian angels on its doors. The couple are also longtime supporters of contemporary artists. Among their prize possessions are a portrait of their daughters by Swiss painter Theo Meier and a collection of ceramics.

Part of the garden now belongs to the Hilton, and Thanpuying Lursakdi continues to embrace it as one of her great pleasures. She loves palms and ferns; she is also fond of orchids and has added an extensive greenhouse for them and other delicate exotic plants behind the house. Every afternoon at five she sets out on a tour of the garden—her clippers in hand and the head gardener in tow—taking cuttings and giving advice on care.

"My mother loves every inch of this house. It's the only place she's ever lived," says Peg Sampatisiri. "I'm certain it's her deep affection that keeps its spirit alive." □



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TO *the* TRADE

STEELING BEAUTY





A faux-bamboo chair, above, and bench by Susan Landau

"I'm attracted to anything bamboo, and I bought a gold-leafed piece at the flea market that gave me the idea of making stainless-steel bamboo tables and chairs," says Los Angeles artist and furniture designer **Susan Landau**, whose clients include **Frank Pennino**. Her Bamboo Series tables are topped with stone or marble. Susan Landau Design, 1529 Wellesley Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90025, 310/447-3014; Randolph & Hein, 8687 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069, 310/855-1222.



HANDLE WITH CARE

Jewelry designer **John Bryant**'s first line of decorative hardware is so new, he has yet to use it himself. But when **Juan Pablo Molyneux** finishes redecorating Bryant's apartment, there will be 60 pieces of the sterling silver hardware in his home. "I had never seen anything like this—and in silver," says Molyneux, who now has some of the doorknobs in his office. Bryant started with animal motifs (above), from a chunky double-tiger doorknob for a front door to levers in a slender alligator shape for double doors. "The smoothness and weight are important," he says. "They have to feel good." He also made drawer pulls in the shape of an open alligator mouth with tiny teeth. "But it's a friendly alligator who doesn't bite," he says. John Bryant, 202/328-0909.

SOUTH AFRICAN FABRICS

"We wanted to break away from the colonial look and create ethnic African fabrics," says Alan Foley, an associate of interior designer **Graham Viney** and Gary St Leger Searle. It was Searle who saw some Ashanti cloths in Johannesburg and suggested a new series of fabrics to follow the Rorke's Drift Collection of colonial African prints (*AD*, July 1997). The result is Ashanti, with bold colors and geometric patterns, inspired by African mud cloths. The centerpiece is *Cowrie* (below), which takes its name from the stylized shells printed on the jute-and-cotton cloths. African motifs appear in *Bakuba* (below), and Nigerian ceremonial cloths are the inspiration for *Galede* and *Masai*, which are woven cotton stripes. The fabrics come in traditional Ashanti colors, such as camel, mustard and terra-cotta. Searle and Viney also have created a range





of braided, distressed and crocodile-embossed leathers. St Leger & Viney, 8 Kramer Rd., Kramerville, 2148 Sandton, South Africa, 27-11-444-6722; Kravet, 979 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022, 212/421-6363.

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IN THE SHOWROOMS





Reymondon's Louis XVI–style tassel, left, and Prelle's Chinese-inspired lampas, below

● Comité Bellecour
Lyons has been a center of silk weaving since the 1400s. Now a consortium of five Lyons firms doing complementary work has named itself Comité Bellecour (212/683-2081), after the 17th-century square in the middle of the city, and has taken up residence at 200 Lexington, New York's downtown design complex. The individual firms are Prelle, silk weavers since 1752; Reymondon, makers of passementerie—fringe and tassels—since 1870; the renowned upholsterer Charles Jouffre; cabinetmaker Thierry Goux, who crafted some exterior doors for Versailles; and Orgiazzi, maker of wrought iron. Prelle and Reymondon have significant historical archives. Prelle has supplied silk for the walls in Newport's Marble House that is identical to the fabric it made for them in 1890 and, at the direction of designer **Thierry W. Despont**, has woven silk for the Boulle room at the Getty Museum (*AD*, Dec. 1997). Comité Bellecour has quickly become a key resource for such designers as Despont and **Peter Marino**.

● The Trading Company
Housed in a new showroom in Vero Beach, Florida, The Trading Company (561/567-7769) has added a lattice-back chair (right) to its line of wicker and rattan furniture. Made in the Philippines, the chair has leather binding and custom fabric by The Trading Company, which names **Vicente Wolf** among clients for its Chinese-made wicker dining chairs.



● Clarence House
Clarence House (800/632-0076) shows the perpetual fascination of Europeans for faraway and mysterious places in two Art Déco designs that the company has revived. *La Feuille du Dunand* (below right), taken from a pattern created by the furniture and fabric designer Jean Dunand, has a bold image of overlapping palm fronds, overscale flowers and leaves in an otherworldly blue and silver. The detailed jungle design in *Gibbon* (below left) is a stylized version of a West African printed fabric.





● Patterson, Flynn & Martin
The venerable rug firm Patterson, Flynn & Martin (212/688-7700) recently was bought by the equally well established fabric company F. Schumacher. Patterson, Flynn & Martin's floorcoverings continue to be as distinctive as ever. The current collection is made up of wool-and-silk rugs hand-knotted in Nepal. One of the designs has an elaborate gold scroll border of leaf shapes with a central grid in a quatrefoil pattern on a black background. Another has an overscale damask pattern in gold against red and black stripes.



From Patterson, Flynn & Martin, a wool-and-silk rug made in Nepal

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TO *the* TRADE



JONATHAN PILKINGTON

LONDON CURTAIN CALL

He's exceptionally knowledgeable, calm and extremely organized," **Wendy Nicholls** says of the drapery maker Michael Kent in London. The fees at **S. C. Sadler**, the London firm that Kent operates, are higher than most, but "his work is unequaled," says Nicholls (above, right, at the workroom). Kent's staff of ten has sewn linens for the royal family (they made the draperies for three carriages in the royal train), and they get jobs from many London-area designers, including **Chester Jones**. Most of S. C. Sadler's work, however, is for **Colefax and Fowler** designers Nicholls, who has been commissioning draperies from the company for more than 20 years, **Vivien Greenock** and **Stanley Falconer**. Kent, like his father before him, personally installs the draperies with an assistant. He traveled to Illinois to hang the draperies in a Falconer interior (*AD*, Aug. 1998). S. C. Sadler, 3 Gerald Mews, Gerald Rd., London SW1W 9EG; 44-171-730-6329.

BRIGHT FINDS IN NEW YORK

In the 1970s Sandra Littman Finkelstein was an architect designing discotheques and restaurants. "I couldn't find decorative lighting for my commercial work," she says. So, with some help from her father, who manufactures fluorescent lights, she started making fixtures for her projects. Nearly 20 years ago she started **The American Glass Light Co.**, and designers such as **Robert Denning**, **Michael de Santis** and **Bunny Williams** have been using her designs, which now number in the hundreds. For residential projects the Bonaparte sconce, which has a silk shade and tassel, and the Hutton style are popular. She also sells a small line of wallpapers, which includes *Lyre and Urn*. The American Glass Light Co., 979 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022; 212/371-4800.



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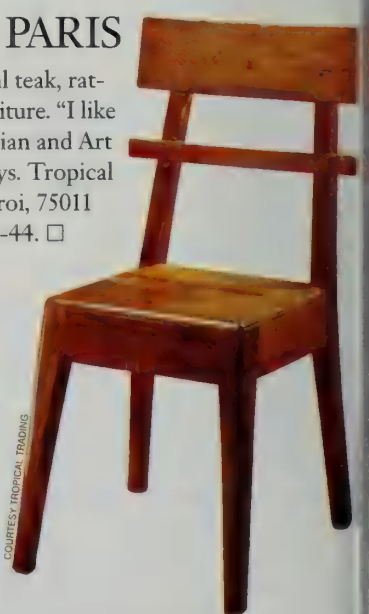
***Lyre and Urn* wallpaper and the Bonaparte, left, and Hutton sconces**

COLONIAL TREASURES IN PARIS

Philippe Starck and **Garouste and Bonetti** find all sorts of antique Chinese, Indian and Malaysian furniture and accessories at **Tropical Trading,** near the Bastille in Paris. Owner Yann Huet is a former marketing executive who went to Asia to buy furniture for his house on St. Bart's and came back with a container's worth of antiques, which he sold in a matter of days after advertising. Housed in a renovated 19th-century industrial building, Tropical Trading also offers Huet's Indonesian-made renditions of colonial teak, rattan and bamboo furniture. "I like aspects of the Victorian and Art Déco periods," he says. Tropical Trading, 23 rue Basfroi, 75011 Paris; 33-1-44-93-93-44. □

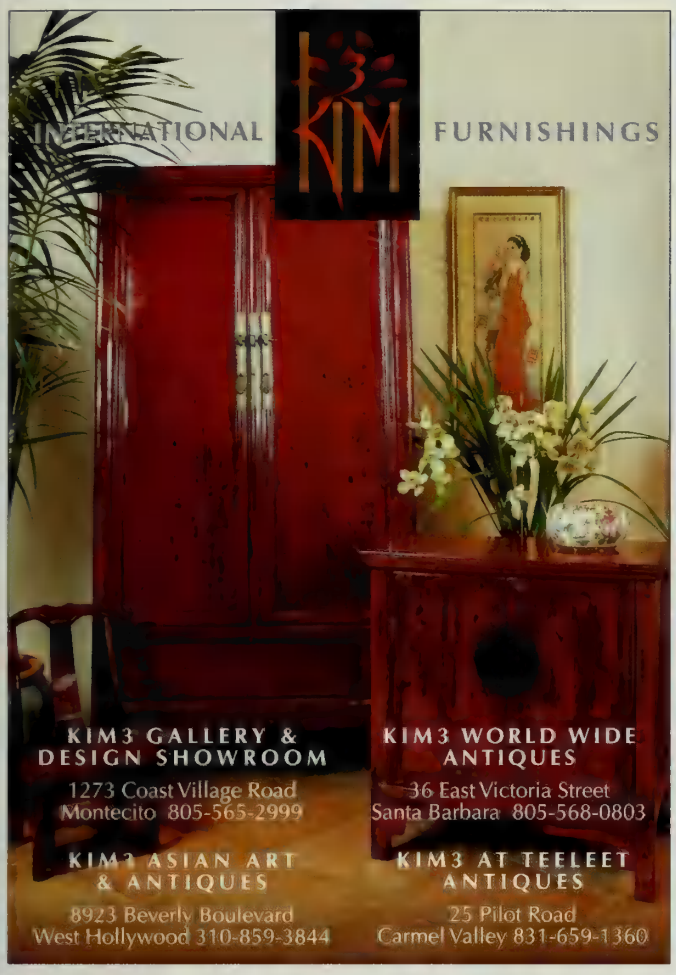


COURTESY TROPICAL TRADING



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A Chinese-style teak chair and a 1930s-style table, left, at Tropical Trading





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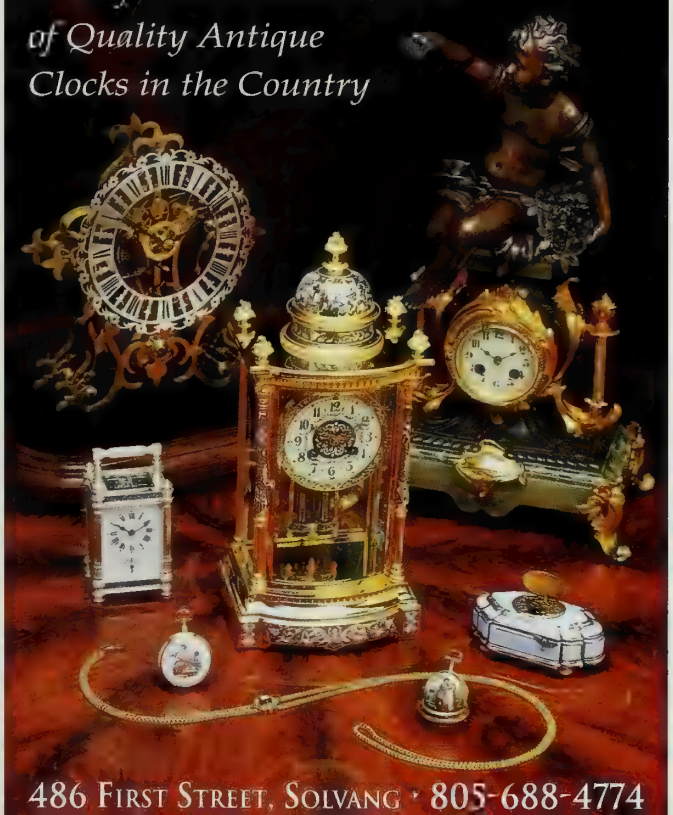
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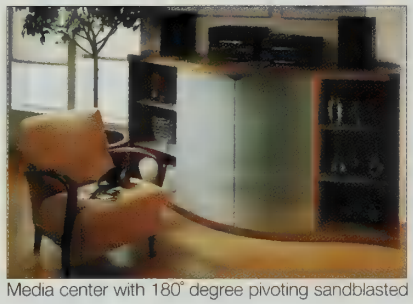


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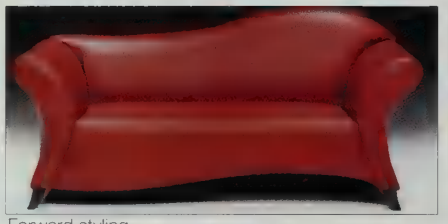


Modern bed in cherry with curved head rest.

Italian Sofas



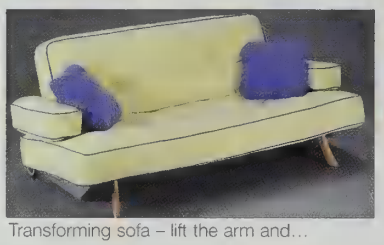
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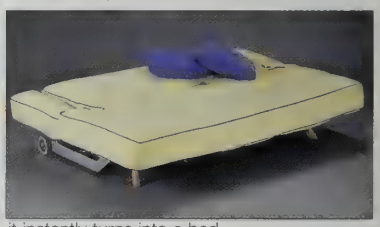
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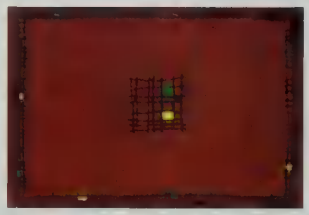


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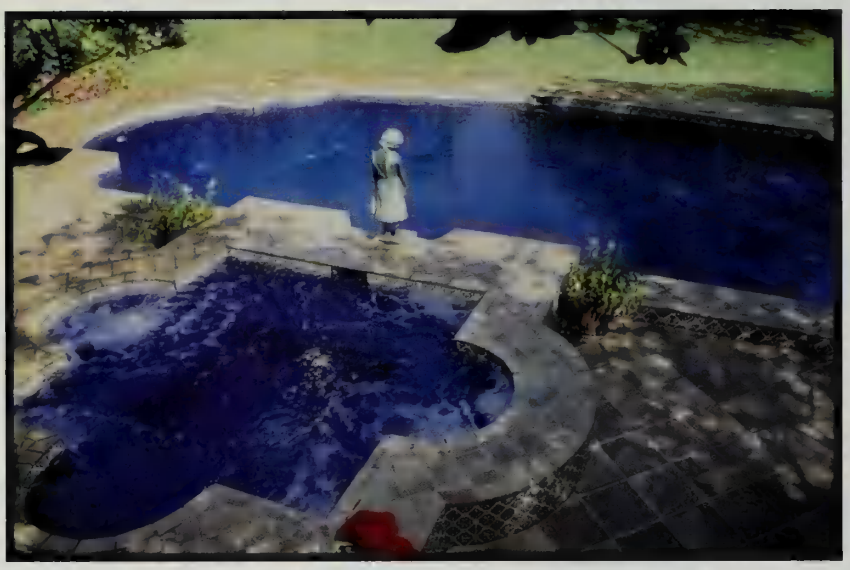
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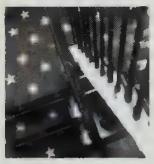
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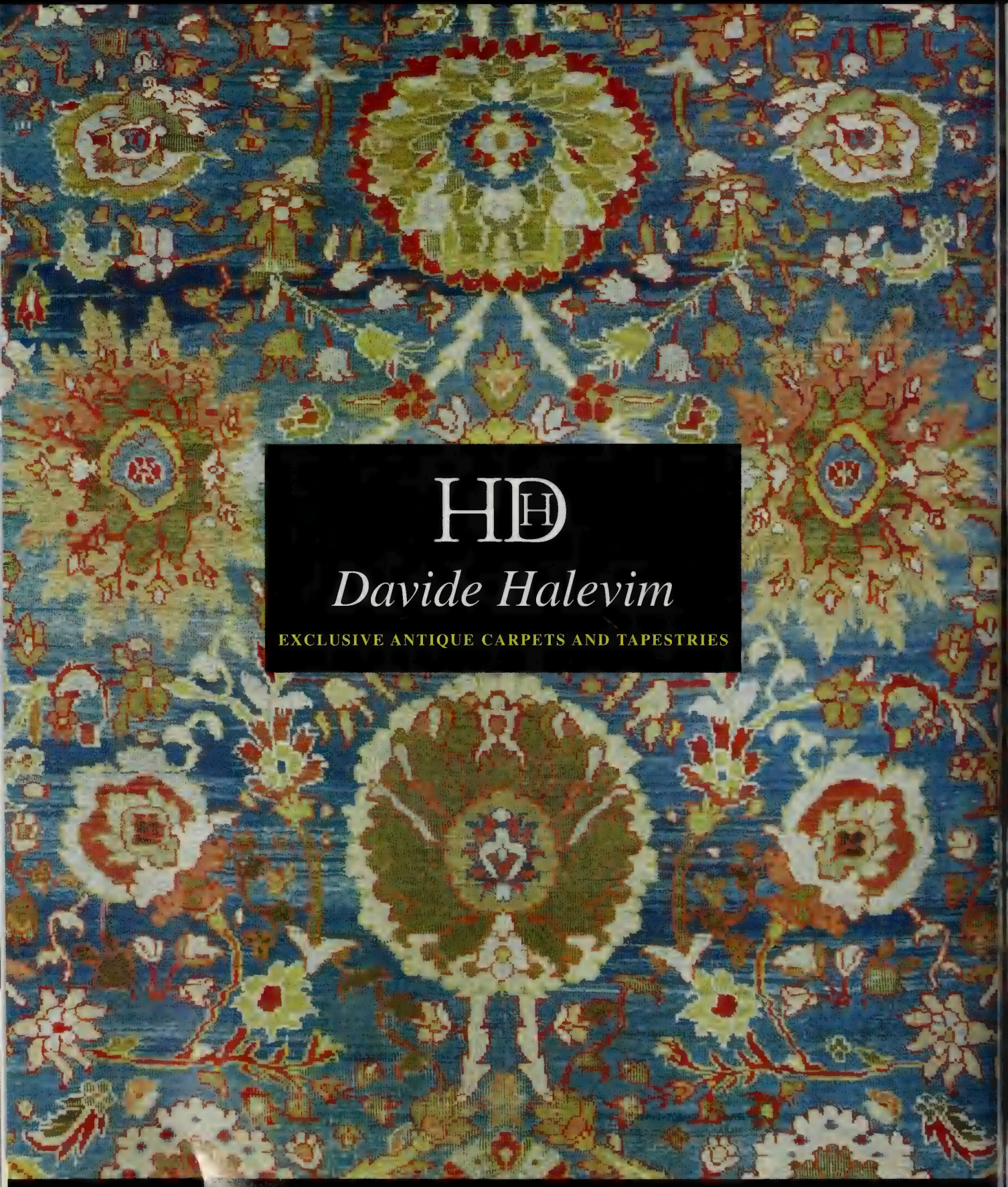
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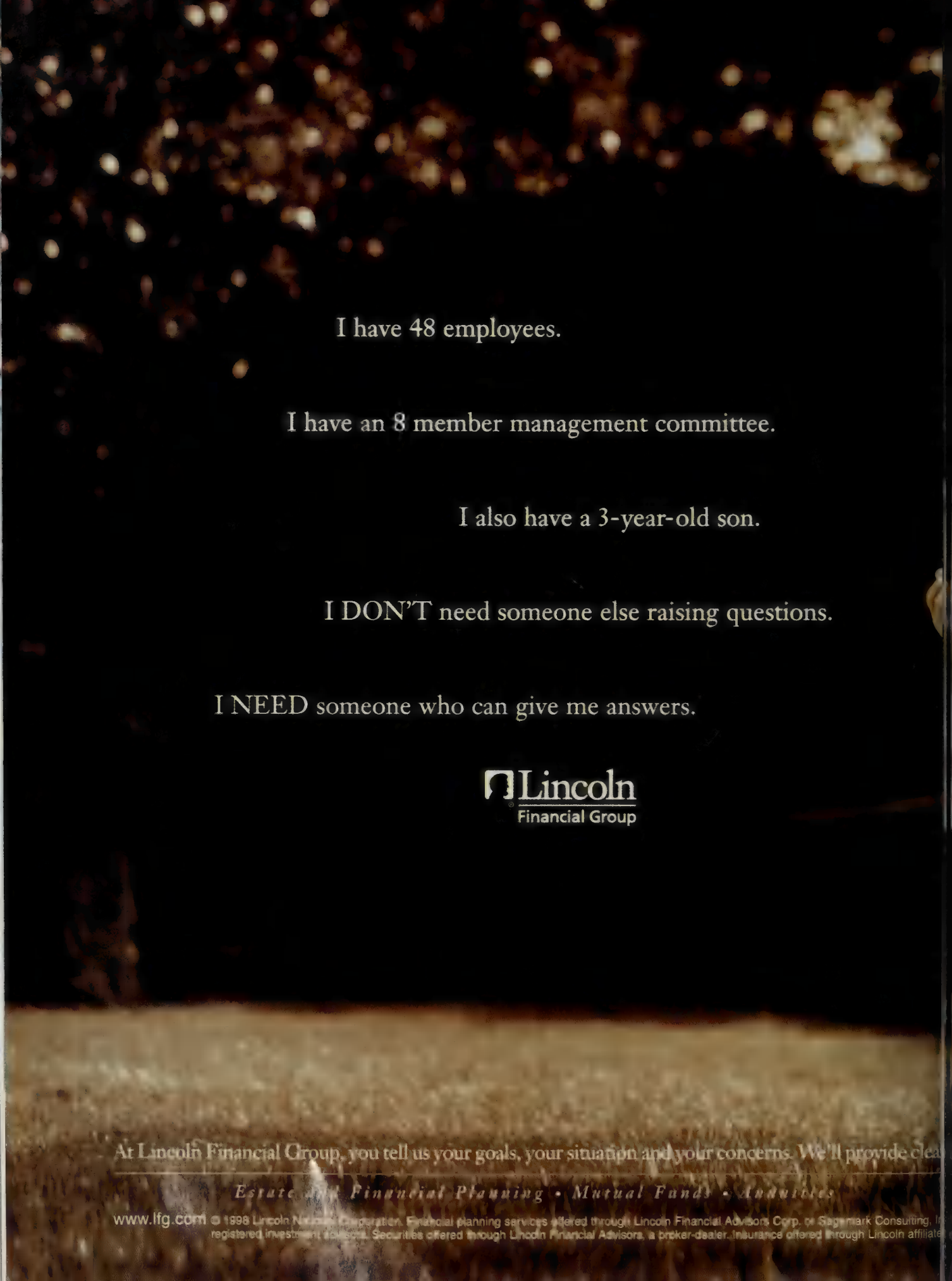
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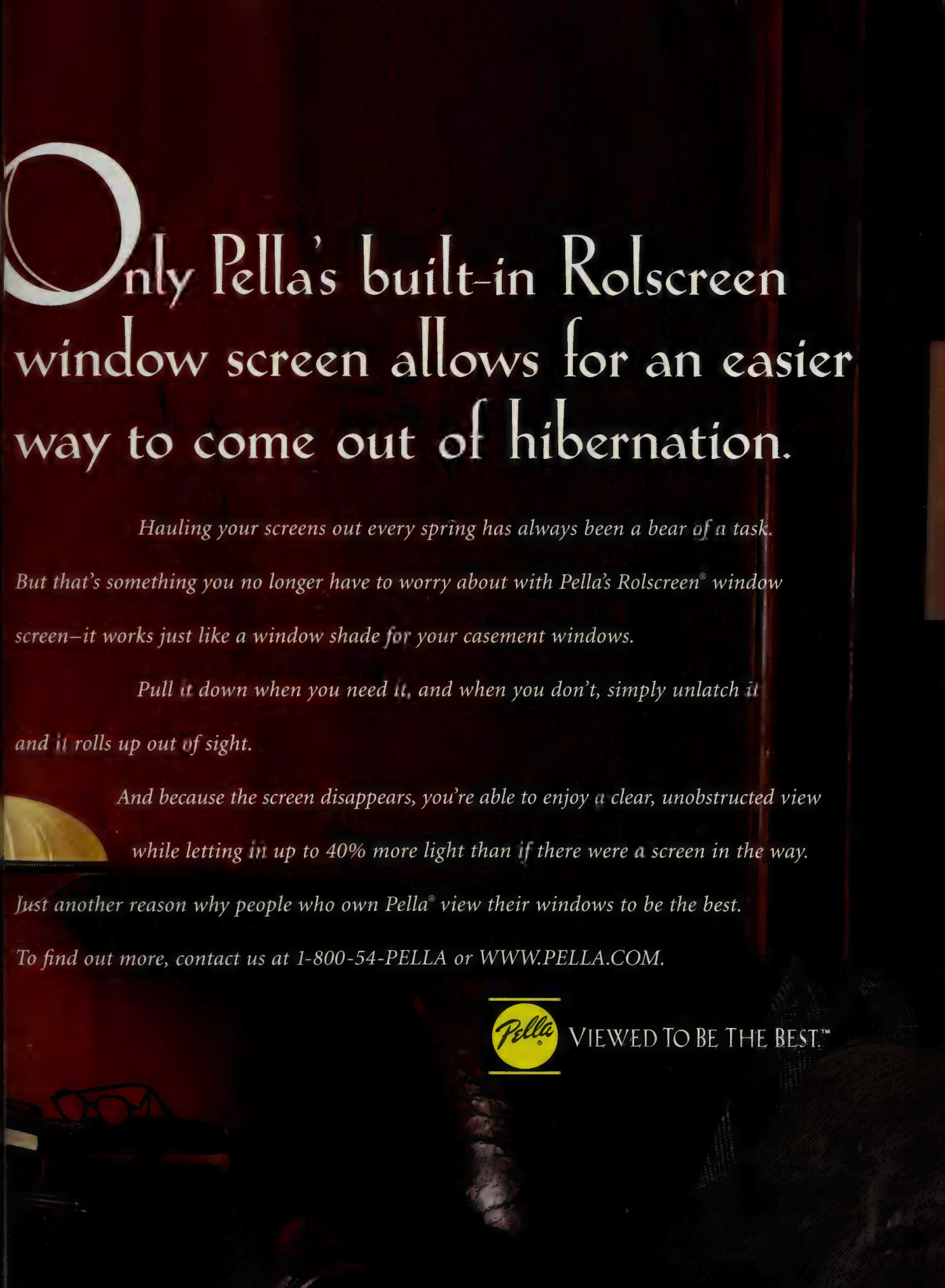
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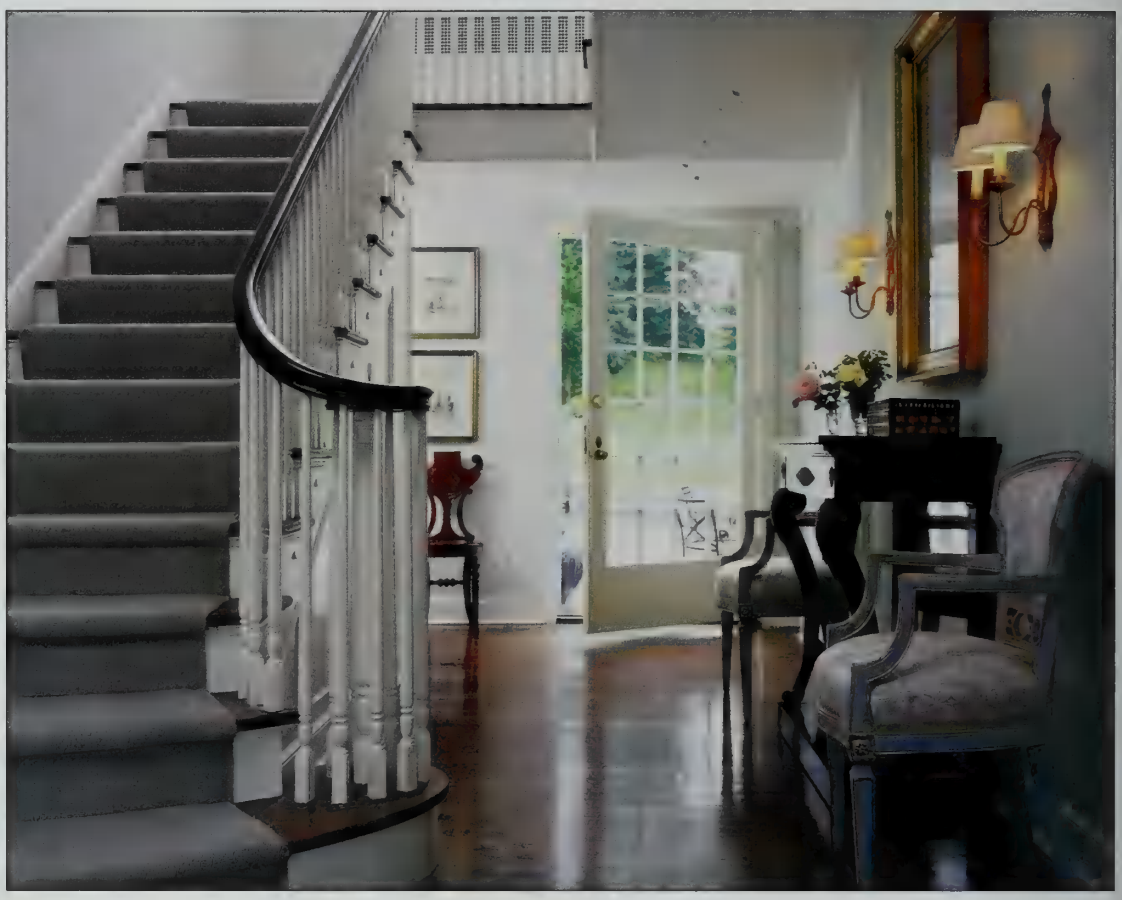
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COVER: The living room of a Fifth Avenue apartment. Architecture by John B. Murray. Interior design by Mario Buatta. After photography by Scott Frances. See page 150. ABOVE RIGHT: The entrance hall of a Westchester County, New York, residence. Interior design by Victoria Hagan. After photography by Scott Frances. See page 160.

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As I See It, #32 in a series
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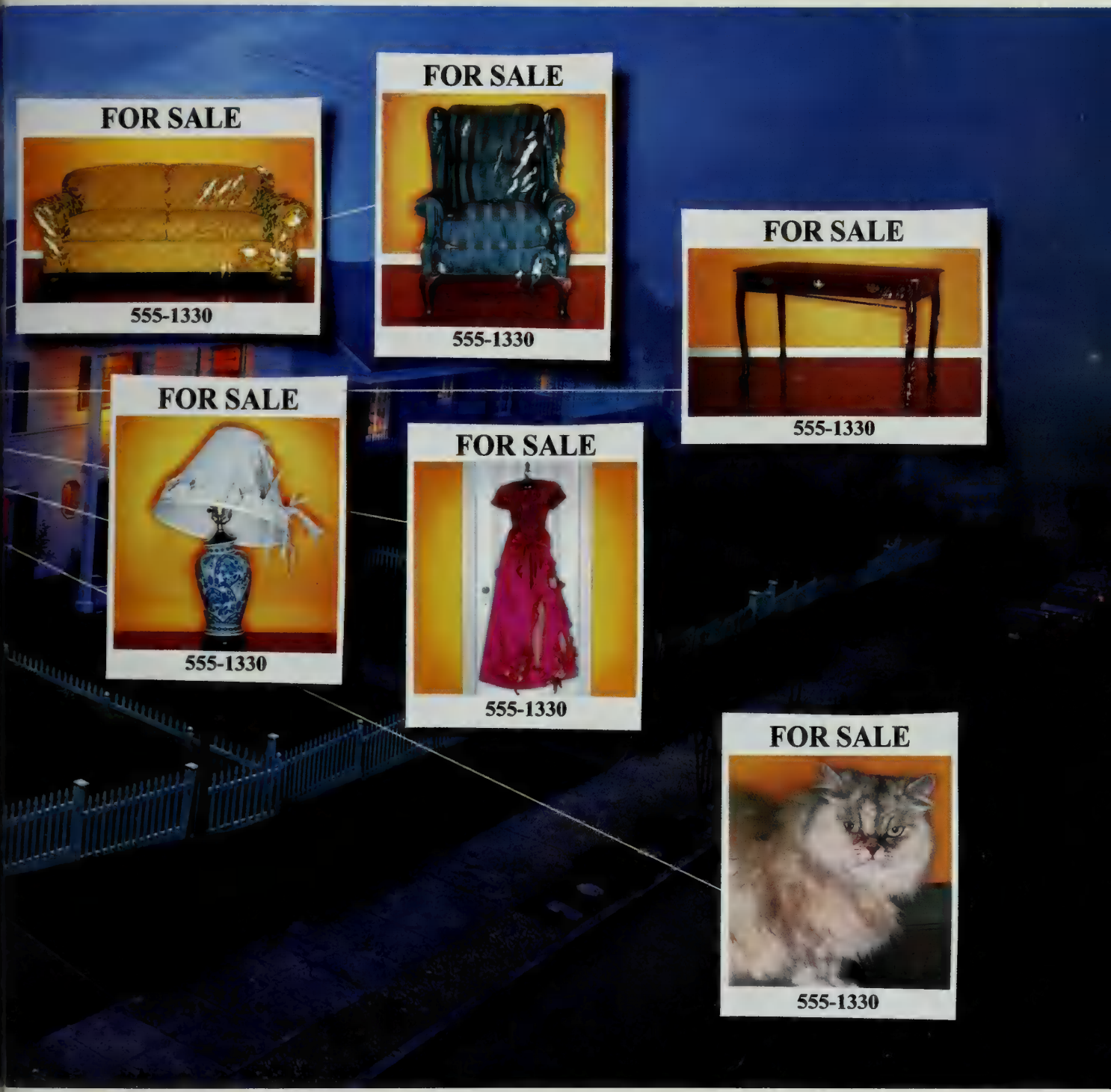


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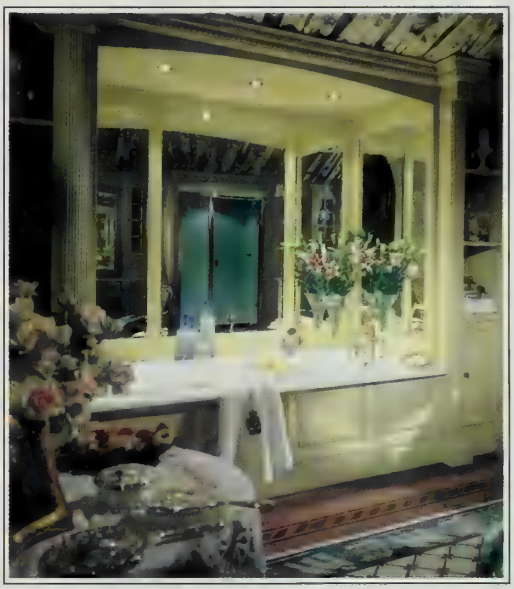
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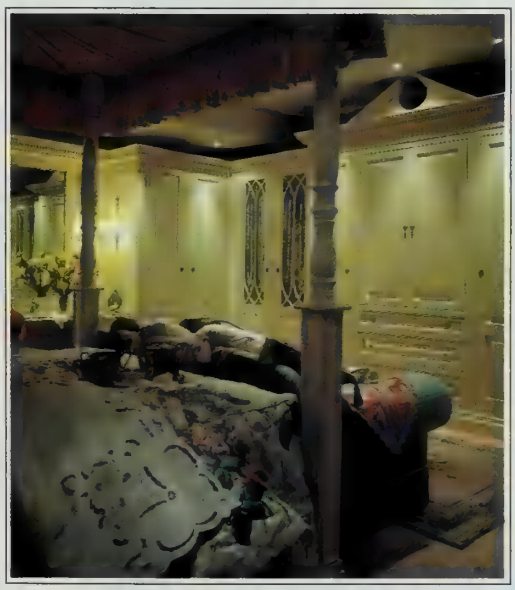
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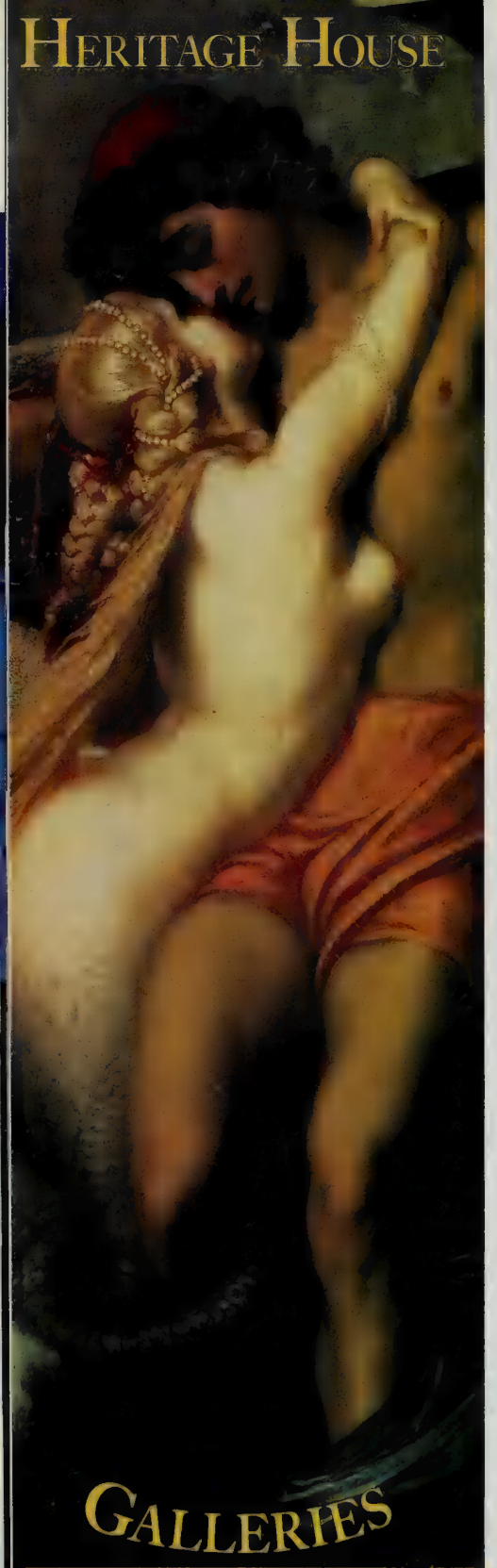
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"PAUL GOLDBERGER PERCEPTIVELY CHRONICLES THE TREND TOWARD BANAL AUTOMOBILE DESIGNS."

Kudos to you! The October 1998 issue of *Architectural Digest* is one of your finest. The cover ("Crisp and Classic in Maryland") is a visual delight. Thomas Pheasant's work is quietly elegant and simply beautiful.

SUSAN PORTER
WASHINGTON, D.C.

In the otherwise outstanding feature "California Folk Gallery" (October), the beautiful game board on page 194 is misidentified. The board is not for Parcheesi but for a game called nine men's morris, also known as merels. The game is thought to have its origins in Egypt around 1400 B.C. It is pictured in medieval tapestries and manuscripts and occasionally found on the back of checkerboards instead of the more common backgammon.

SONDRA AND ALAN ENGEL
OXFORD, OHIO

A Rolls-Royce is not intended for something as mundane as mere transportation ("AD Autos: Driving the Silver Seraph," October). As a Rolls-Royce owner for the past sixteen years, I have never considered modern design, convenience or even reliability a primary reason to drive one of these cars. Mass-produced cars are automobiles; a Rolls-Royce is a work of art.

ROBERT J. DU PUIS
OAK BROOK, ILLINOIS

I am pleased with the scope and variety of the projects in *Architectural Digest*. As an architect, I find it helpful for exploring architectural and design concepts with my clients.

J. P. FLOURNOY
GLADSTONE, MISSOURI

I enjoyed "Gardens: The Hamlet of Marie Antoinette" in the October issue. It was well written and interesting. However, there are several botanical errors that detract from the article. First, in the caption on page 229, please note the identification of "flowering artichokes" is incorrect. These plants are flowering cabbage or kale. On page 231, perennial blue salvia is incorrectly identified as lavender.

JACK R. RICHARDS
KEIZER, OREGON

I have wondered for years about the purpose of pillow shams or decorative pillows on a bed—other than adding interest for passing photographers. For me, a beautiful bed is simple, like the one shown on page 239 in "Architecture: A Tribeca Renovation" (October). Nothing sham there.

AGNETE KAY
CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA

Paul Goldberger quite perceptively chronicles the trend toward the increasing banality of automobile designs in the November 1998 issue ("AD Autos: The Identical Sedan"). It's also interesting to note the apparent contrast between the highly baroque automobile design of the 1950s and the architectural and interior styles of the time, which were simple and almost completely devoid of ornamentation. In the 1990s it is the cars that are stark, while architecture and interior design have embraced ornamentation.

STUART M. BERKMAN
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Your November cover ("Los Angeles Light") looks as if the owners of the apartment have just moved out and have left some furnishings for later removal.

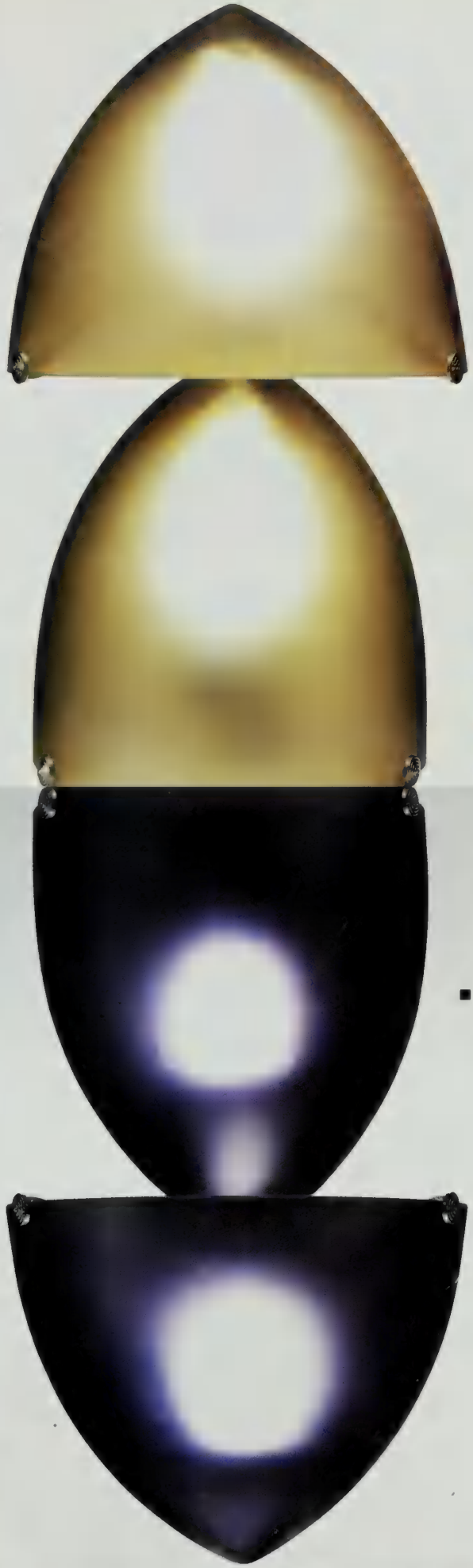
JOYCE FERGUSON
EUGENE, OREGON

Did someone confuse the Louis in your November issue? The console pictured on page 230 ("Americans in Paris") is not Louis XIV style—it has no Baroque features. It does, however, exhibit all the trademarks of a Louis XVI–style piece.

SHIRLEY ROSIN
PICKERING, ONTARIO, CANADA

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KENNETH NOLAND

The March issue contains two rarities: private residences by architect Richard Meier and designer Andrée Putman. Increasingly engaged in vast public projects such as the Getty Center, Meier has accepted few residential commissions in recent years. But houses allow the architect to explore his brand of end-of-the-century modernism on a more intimate scale, and the Florida residence we show next month is a sublime meditation on space and light. Putman, for her part, is noted for her distinctive work on hotels such as Morgans in New York, as well as for her brilliant furniture designs. Her vision for an apartment in Belgium is a sleek summation of a lifetime in design. Other March features include Denise Hale's legendary H-E ranch in Sonoma; the renowned villas at the Peninsula hotel in Beverly Hills; and Hirschl & Adler president Stuart P. Feld's apartment in Manhattan. What else? Strong new designs by Sills Huniford, Thad Hayes, Bray-Schaible and Mariette Himes Gomez; a shopping trip with Marc Charbonnet in New Orleans; and Paul Goldberger's account of a newly restored masterpiece by Richard Neutra, the Kaufmann House in Palm Springs.

Paige Rense
Editor-in-Chief

Susan Cheever is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer. Her memoir *Note Found in a Bottle* is being published this month by Simon & Schuster.

Hunter Drohojowska-Philp, a writer who specializes in art and design, is working on a biography of Georgia O'Keeffe, to be published by Knopf.

Roland Flamini, a writer based in Washington, D.C., is the author of *Thalberg: The Last Tycoon and the World of MGM*. He is writing a biography of French diplomat Edmond Genet.

Michael Frank is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer. His short stories, essays and articles have appeared in *Antaeus*, *The Southwest Review*, *The New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*.

Paul Goldberger is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer and a Pulitzer Prize–winning architecture critic.

Jonathan Kandell has written two books about Latin America, *Passage Through El Dorado* and *La Capital: The Biography of Mexico City*.

Carol Lutfy, a 1998–99 National Arts Journalism Program Fellow at Columbia University, has written for *Time* and *The New York Times Magazine*.

Aileen Mehle is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer and the author of the "Suzy" column for *W* and *Women's Wear Daily*.

Dana Micucci, a New York–based writer, is a contributing editor to *Art & Antiques* magazine.

Penelope Rowlands has written for *Vogue*, *Art & Auction*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Premiere* and other magazines.


COURTESY JEFFREY SIMPSON

Jeffrey Simpson, an *Architectural Digest* contributing editor, recently completed *Chautauqua: An American Utopia* for Harry N. Abrams.

Suzanne Stephens is on the board of directors of the Architectural League of New York and Sir John Soane's Museum Foundation.


JILL KREMENTZ

Annette Tapert, the author of *The Power of Style*, is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer. Her book *The Power of Glamour* was published in November by Crown.

Judith Thurman, an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer, is the author of *Isak Dinesen: The Life of a Storyteller*, which won a National Book Award. She is completing *Secrets of the Flesh: A Life of Colette* for Knopf.

Nicholas von Hoffman, an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer, has written for *The New Republic* and *The New Yorker*. Among his many books are *Make-Believe Presidents*, *Capitalist Fools* and *Citizen Cohn*.

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AD at LARGE

ISLAND ADVENTURE

For three years we sailed the Caribbean looking for our El Dorado. We found a teak plantation on Trinidad, and that's how we came to design, make and sell teak furniture," says Valérie Dumoulin, who eventually settled down on the Ile de Ré with her husband, Pierre Dawlat, in 1993. That's where **Alain Demachy**, whose brother lives on the secluded French island, discovered them and their shop, **Trinidad**. "My background is in architecture, and for me their pieces have an architectural look," says Demachy. "They're very simple yet luxurious, and they're top quality." Demachy likes the couple's Tamana chaise longue: "It's got more character and it's larger than others on the market." Dumoulin notes, "We made the back higher so the head doesn't hit the top of the chair." She and her husband design furniture with conveniences such as removable headrests and, in the case of the Tamana, footrest and canvas seat. The couple, intending to show how teak can be used indoors, recently developed a washbasin and bath accessories made entirely of laminated plantation teak, which stands up to humidity and water. They ship everywhere and accept custom orders. Trinidad, 17590 Ars en Ré, France; 33-5-46-29-41-36.



MARINA FAUST



MARINA FAUST

Alain Demachy with the Tamana chair, top, and a teak bath counter and tables, above, at Trinidad



GETHOP

GLORIOUS GLITTER

In Manhattan, which has a specialty neighborhood for just about everything, there is a block or two of shops in the West 30s selling glittery trimmings. **Tinsel Trading**, one of the oldest of these shops, has a unique collection of metallic passementerie. Marcia Ceppos, whose grandfather started the business in 1933, sells vintage and new trim (some of it made of old metallic thread from France) to associates of **Peter Marino** and **Robert A. M. Stern** as well as to costume designers. Virginia Reeves, of **Brian McCarthy**'s office, says, "I've been on the hunt for metallic thread. I'm delighted to find this." Tinsel Trading, 47 W. 38th St., New York, NY 10018; 212/730-1030.



JOHN LEI

At Tinsel Trading in New York, a plethora of vintage and new tassels, above right, and trim, right

continued on page 36



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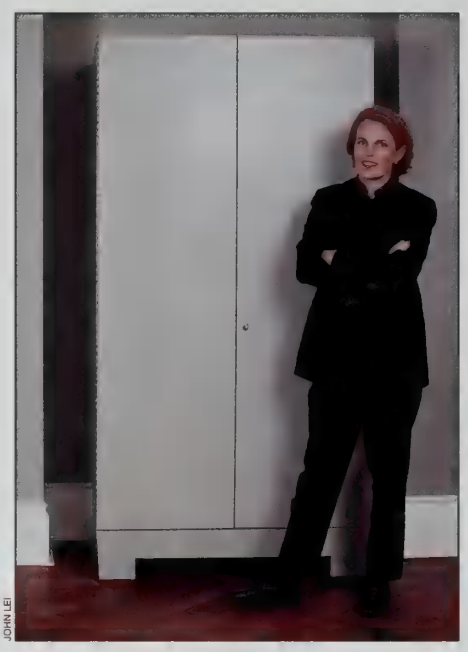
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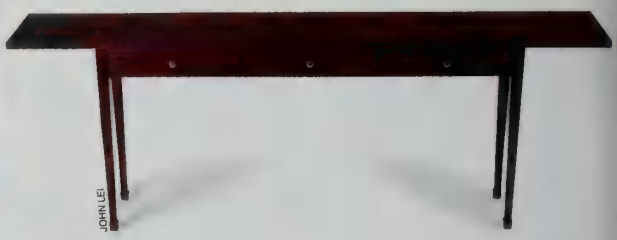
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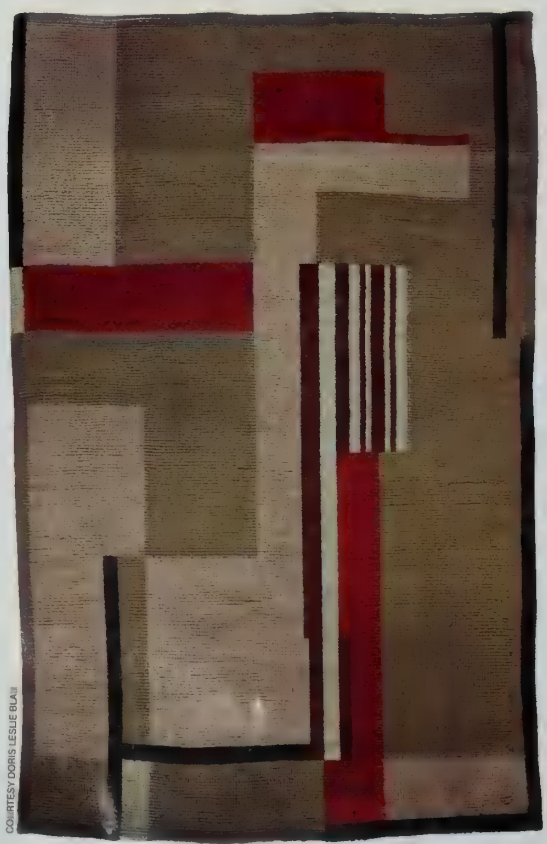

JOHN LEI


JOHN LEI


JOHN LEI

"I thought it was important that my furniture designs be profoundly functional," says architect **Annabelle Selldorf** (right). "They should almost serve as background elements for people's collections." Selldorf found that she would design a stereo cupboard for one client, then discover that her next client wanted one too. "So I might as well have a line," she recalls reasoning. Each piece in her collection is individually handcrafted, but there are about ten examples to choose from, and all share classic lines and attenuated shapes. "I found it very difficult to get upholstered chairs and sofas with delicate proportions, so I devised a particular size and shape that's universal but fundamentally modern." Selldorf says her pieces work equally well whether mixed with Chinese furniture, 17th-century Flemish needlepoint rugs or ultraminimalist design. She also emphasizes that she maintains a high level of quality not found in "average produced furniture." Her chairs (above) are filled with horsehair, which is springy and resilient; an armoire (above left) is coated with an especially dense matte paint; and a walnut console table (above) is hand-rubbed and fitted with brass knobs that are left unlacquered so they will acquire a mellow patina. Selldorf Architects, 212/219-9571.


COURTESY DORIS LESLIE BLAU


COURTESY DORIS LESLIE BLAU

Two French rugs at Doris Leslie Blau: Moderne, right, ca. 1922, and Orienta, ca. 1930

DORIS LESLIE BLAU'S DECO

Doris Leslie Blau, the doyenne of New York's rug world and known for such sayings as "I treat the carpet as an art form," wanted to retire, but clients such as **David Easton** did not want her out of the game altogether. Enter Nader Bolour of **Y & B Bolour** (*AD*, July 1993), who was yearning to branch out on his own. The result is perfect synergy, says Blau, who is still involved in the business. "Nader has an eye as close to mine as I could have imagined, but he has a concept of modernist carpets that I didn't." He has brought in 1920s through 1940s rugs designed by Jules and Paule Leleu, Marion Dorn and Eileen Gray. Doris Leslie Blau, 724 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10019; 212/586-5511.

continued on page 40



THE BOMBAY SAPPHIRE MARTINI. AS ACCESSORIZED BY JUDITH LEIBER.

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AD at LARGE



BILLY CUNNINGHAM

DEALER'S SANCTUM

One New Yorker—the fourth generation of his family to run an eminent gallery of medieval and Renaissance art—has revived the enviable way of life of a prewar dealer surrounded by the exquisite antiques he sells. Tony Blumka has reestablished the **Blumka Gallery**, which his father had moved from Vienna 60 years ago, in a town house (left) designed by architect **Peter Pennoyer**. There, he and his family live among Italian bronzes, Flemish tapestries and German sculpture. Blumka Gallery, 209 E. 72nd St., New York, NY 10021; 212/734-3222.



COURTESY IMPERIAL PLEASURES

A MING DYNASTY

Robert A. Piccus, whose parents auctioned off a famous collection of 110 pieces of Chinese classical furniture in 1997, sells full-scale and miniature reproductions of fine Chinese chairs, stools, tables, cabinets and stands. Made of the same centuries-old woods, such as *huanghuali* and *zitan*, the pieces are handcrafted in the Orient, where **Imperial Pleasures**, Piccus's business, is based. Imperial Pleasures, G/F, Garley Building, 51A Graham St., Central, Hong Kong; 852-2540-6011.



COURTESY IMPERIAL PLEASURES

A reproduction plum blossom stool, left, and a washbasin stand with a towel rack from Imperial Pleasures

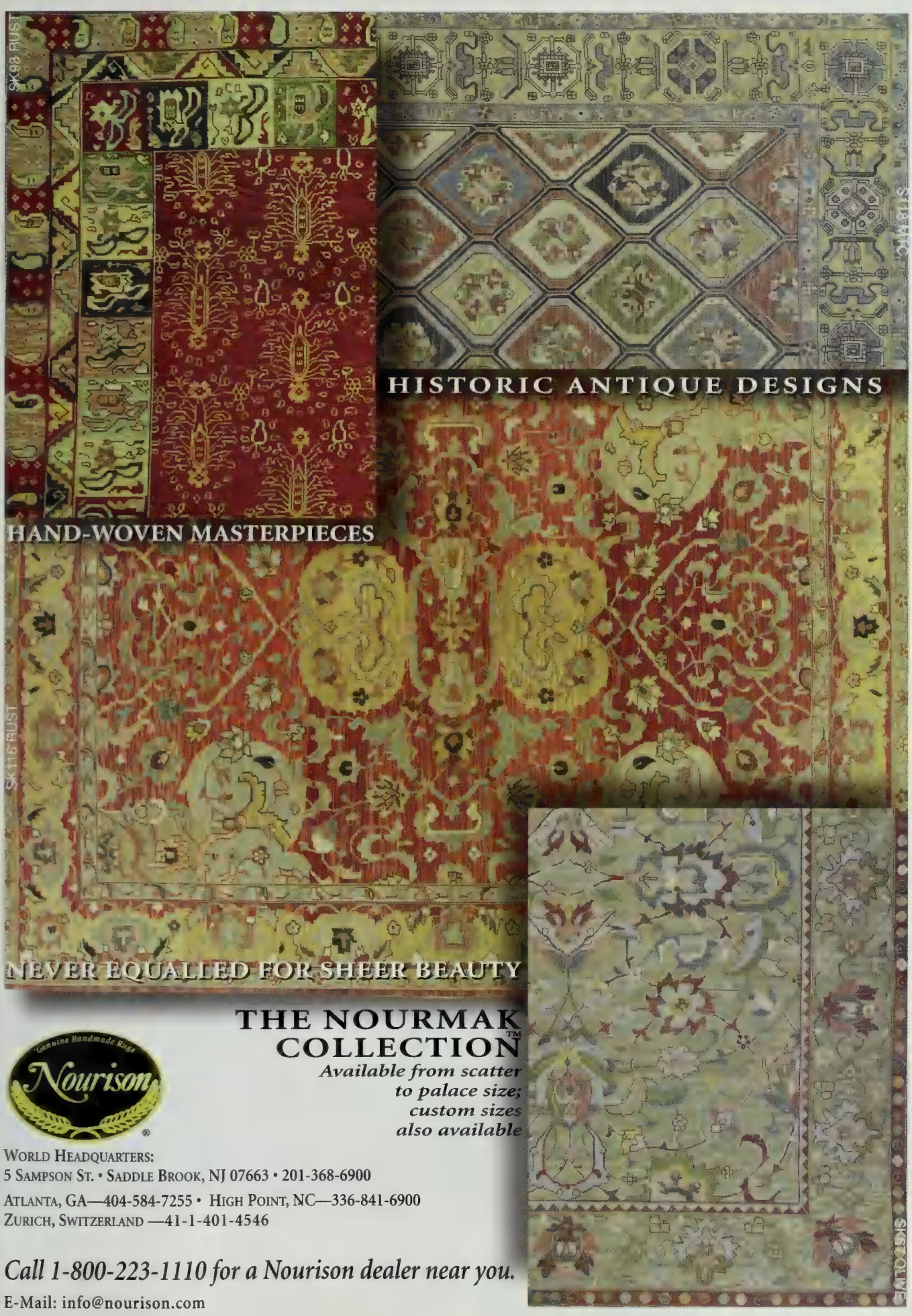


JOHN HAMMOND

ENGLISH TRACK STAR

When **Victoria Bridgeman** was working for **John Hobbs**, she saw American designers rushing through London in two or three days trying to find antiques for several clients at once. Recently she decided to strike out on her own as a furniture scout and researcher. "I can be their eyes and ears in London," says Bridgeman, who tracks down furniture for **Juan Pablo Molyneux**, **Bunny Williams** and several other designers in the United States. "She's clever and intelligent," says Molyneux. "She locates fine, whimsical furniture, like Hobbs's, but her prices are more affordable." Bridgeman is asked to search for all kinds of pieces, from Regency to Colonial to Art Déco. For Molyneux she found a French gueridon with a *fleur de pêche* marble top; for another client, a ca. 1820 English painted and parcel-gilt cabinet (above). Victoria Bridgeman, 44-171-221-6864.

continued on page 44



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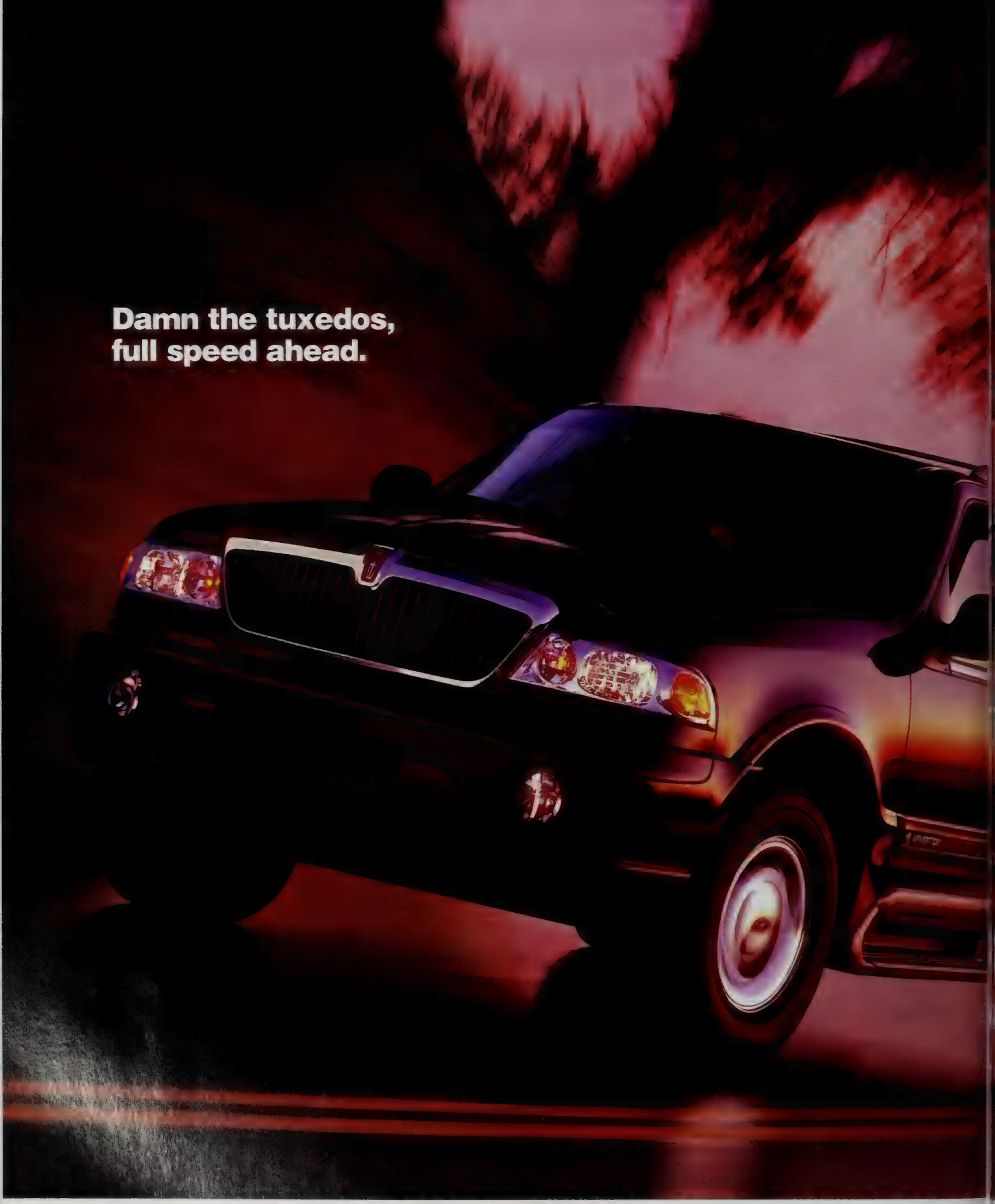
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FRENCH CONNECTION

It's a little bit like going home," the French-born **Philippe Oates** says of the new **Galerie de France** in Los Angeles, where he has resided for the past 15 years. Oates is enamored of most things in the shop—from a massive 1940s table of tiny beveled glass cubes framed in chrome and a Ruhlmann chrome table mirror with ivory inlay to Regency black-lacquered chairs with gilt detailing (right) and a pair of early-19th-century Bambara sculptures. "They have incredible taste in furniture and decorative things from Régence, Louis XV and Art Déco through the 1940s," Oates says of owners Michael Descours and Charles Dauphin. The pair, who have had a shop in Lyons since 1973, opened Galerie de France on La Cienega's antiques row only a year ago, bringing with them 18th- through 20th-century French furniture, mirrors, chandeliers and sconces, paintings and ceramics, as well as a smattering of English and Italian pieces. Oates credits the partners' success to their contacts with patrician families in parts of France. "The Burgundy area still has a wealth of great antiques because there are many châteaux that haven't been touched," he says. Galerie de France, 806 N. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90069; 310/360-9124.



JIM MCHUGH

Philippe Oates at Galerie de France in Los Angeles

MODERNIST REPERTOIRE

Victoria Hagan bought two bronze benches with leather seats; **Mariette Himes Gomez**, a patinated-bronze table with a limestone top; **Juan Montoya**, obelisk-shaped slate lamps; and the list goes on and on. The Collection Marie Guerin at **Reymer-Jourdan Antiques** in New York has been such a hit that longtime transatlantic partners Douglas Reymer and Mady Jourdan have added several new designs, including the bronze-and-leather bench, to the line, which is made in France under the direction of Jourdan's daughter, Marie Guerin. Inspired by classic modernist styles, the collection now comprises 45 accent pieces, including patinated iron or brass bookcases with limed-oak shelves. Notes Reymer, "None of them are copies." Reymer-Jourdan Antiques, 29 E. 10th St., New York, NY 10003; 212/674-4470.



COURTESY REYMER-JOURDAN



COURTESY REYMER-JOURDAN

A bronze-and-leather bench, left, and a leather lamp with a parchment shade at Reymer-Jourdan

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AFRICAN HORIZONS



COURTESY KEITH SKEEL

Keith Skeel's latest enterprise: a showroom of African and colonial antiques in Cape Town

Wherever English dealer Keith Skeel buys a residence, he also opens an antiques shop. When he bought an apartment in New York two years ago, he took 3,000 square feet in ABC Carpet & Home. (He already has two antiques emporiums, one of them called Eccentricities, in his home base of London.) Recently, after settling into his three-level house in Cape Town, South Africa, Skeel set up a showroom on one floor to display ethnic African antiquities and colonial furniture. He opened with three nine-foot carved drums (above) positioned around a Cape Dutch armoire, primitive-looking African tables and wood chairs and armchairs upholstered with old French linens. Skeel also is showing a group of antique sailboat models and woven straw shields. Keith Skeel, 27-21-419-1303; Keith Skeel Antiques, 888 Broadway, New York, NY 10003, 212/473-3000, ext. 597; Eccentricities, 94/100 Islington High St., London N1 8EG, 44-171-226-7012.

SAVANNAH HARDWARE



COURTESY CARTER CAMPBELL

Carter Campbell, a designer in Savannah, Georgia, has created an atmospheric collection of bronze hardware based on pieces found in historic local houses. Included are a finial Campbell calls Empress, in the form of an Asian woman's head (left), a drawer pull in the shape of a tortoiseshell, a door handle that represents a magnolia bud, a large pull in the form of an Art Nouveau–style woman's head framed in luxuriant tresses and a faux-bamboo drawer pull. New York antiques dealer and fabrics distributor **John Rosselli**, who maintains a residence in Savannah, has ordered from Campbell's collection. Campbell Design Group, 17 W. McDonough St., Savannah, GA 31401; 912/238-5400. □



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SOPHISTICATED STOCKHOLM

DAVID EASTON'S BEST SOURCES IN THE SWEDISH CAPITAL

Text by Jonathan Kandell
Photography by
Daniel H. Minassian



LEFT: New York–based designer David Easton travels yearly to Stockholm, whose many inlets "give it something of the allure of Venice."

When interior designer David Easton traveled to Stockholm in 1987, he arrived the old-fashioned way, by sailing across the Baltic Sea from St. Petersburg, then still known as Leningrad. "It struck me as such a lovely place," Easton says, remembering this early encounter with Sweden's capital. The city's scenic archipelago and turn-of-the-century Nordic-style buildings with their green oxidized-copper roofs guaranteed that he would treat himself to another visit. "Stockholm is still pretty much undiscovered by travelers," says Easton, who oversees the New York design firm David Anthony Easton Incorporated. But it's a different well-kept secret—the bounty of antique furniture and accessories in Stockholm's shops—that draws the designer back at least once a year.

His most recent journey was made to purchase furnishings for the apartment of a Scandinavian client living in New York. The client favors the Gustavian and Empire periods, when Sweden developed its own Neoclassical style in architecture and interior design. "Gustavian furniture has a provincial charm—and I don't mean that in a pejorative sense," says Easton. "It has a simpler quality and a softer edge to it than Neoclassical furniture from other parts of Europe."

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ABOVE: In the elegant Östermalm district is the shop B & L Wahlström, filled with "marvelous Baltic furniture —eclectic but purely Swedish," says Easton.



RIGHT: Easton studies a circa 1825 Italian cork model of the Temple of Poseidon at Paestum atop a Swedish *retour d'Egypte* console in Wahlström's window.



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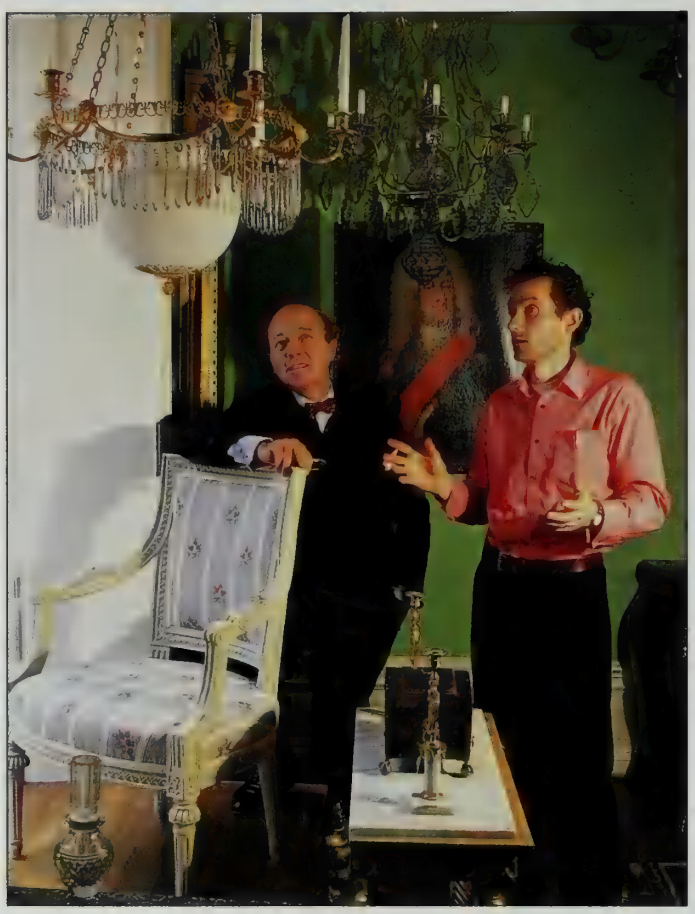
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SOPHISTICATED STOCKHOLM



RIGHT: In Lundgrens Antikhandel, which specializes in antique light fixtures, Easton and co-owner Ian Lundgren admire a Gustavian chandelier.

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Partly because Swedish aristocrats were never as wealthy as their English and French counterparts, and partly because of an inclination toward coolness that has been called a Swedish national trait, Neoclassical decoration in Sweden was subdued. It relied less on the carving and gilding of surfaces and is also characterized by a preference for linens over silks, faience over porcelain and pine floors over oak parquetry.

Easton isn't surprised that these qualities have sparked a noticeable appetite for Swedish antiques in the United States, particularly for use in weekend houses. "Swedish country style reflects an interest in a more understated, relaxed look that still succeeds in being elegant," he says.

Cost is certainly a factor in the appeal of Swedish antiques; prices in Stockholm shops are inexpensive by New York, London and Paris standards. "Except for something with a great provenance," says Easton, "Swedish furniture and accessories cost considerably less than American, English or French pieces from the same period. If I were to buy a Regency console table, I would be prepared to pay a third more than for a comparable Swedish piece."

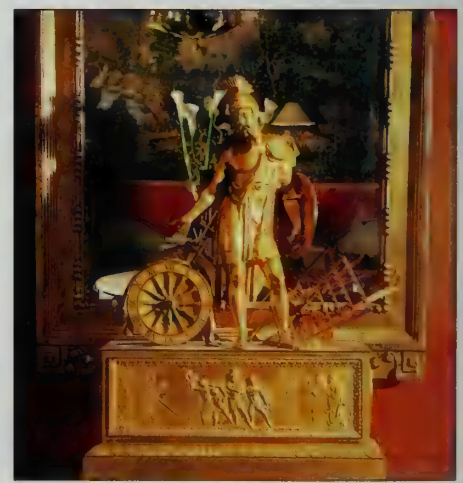
The finest antiques dealers in Stockholm—perhaps thirty in all—are concentrated in the Östermalm district, a short walk from the Royal Palace and the National Museum, which overlook the water. Östermalm was the residential neighborhood of the early-twentieth-century industrialists and bankers who piloted the nation's remarkable, long-lived drive toward prosperity. There they commissioned a generation of talented architects to construct apartment buildings of limestone, granite and marble, which still awe and delight visitors.

In recent decades Stockholm has prided itself on its tolerant, hip atmosphere. Open-air pop concerts attract youthful crowds to the Kungsträdgården, a former royal garden in the shadow of the Opera House. Patrons of the Grand Hotel and the Café Opera aren't spared the sight and whiff of nearby sausage stands. Yet an invisible line seems to have been drawn at the boundary of

continued on page 56



LEFT: A hand-painted circa 1850 mural of a theatrical curtain hints at Rehns Antikhandel's past as a cinema.



ABOVE: At Rehns Antikhandel, an Empire bronze-doré clock stands before a circa 1800 German mirror.

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SOPHISTICATED STOCKHOLM

continued from page 54

Östermalm, preserving its decorum. Noise abates as pedestrians enter its spotless streets and generous squares. Taste thrives there in many guises: antiquarians and contemporary art galleries, fashion boutiques and architecture studios, gourmet restaurants and jazz cellars.

Easton launches his foray with a visit to a trio of Östermalm stores. B & L Wahlström is named after the couple who own it, Barbro and Lennart Wahlström, and specializes in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century furniture, chandeliers and accessories. "The Wahlströms always have a mix of very handsome antiques," says Easton, who displays particular interest in a Swedish chandelier and several circa 1820 dining chairs. The bowl-shaped chandelier is of gilt and black bronze, with sculpted swans and owls between six candleholders. The chairs are made of birch and covered in striped linen, in a style known as Swedish Biedermeier. He is also drawn to an early-nineteenth-century console table with a *faux-marbre* top resting on carved wood Egyptian heads and torsos that taper into gilt horse legs.



LEFT: Stockholm's Gamla Stan is an ancient, historically rich neighborhood where "narrow cobblestoned streets open up into squares," says Easton.

Around the corner from B & L Wahlström is Lundgrens Antikhandel, owned by brothers Ian and Theo Lundgren. "They have the best collection of chandeliers in the city," asserts Easton. "For the most part, these are Swedish and Baltic chandeliers—quite scarce and expensive."

So many are crammed into Lundgrens Antikhandel that navigating between them can be difficult. Some hang from the ceiling just inches above head height. Others lie on the floor, waiting for their brass to be shined or their crystals to be restrung. Among the standouts is a circa 1810 chandelier with pale purple teardrop crystals draping from a gilt-brass frame decorated with Egyptian heads. The designer is also interested in two giltwood examples with dragons carved on their arms, which decorated the original Stockholm Opera

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RIGHT: At Polstjernan Antikviteter, two gilt-metal candlesticks and a wall clock with ormolu mounts share space on a Gustavian marble-topped commode.



FAR RIGHT: Easton and Ulf Olsson, Polstjernan's co-owner, discuss a circa 1750 Swedish tea table with a grisaille finish, gilt detail and a porcelain top.

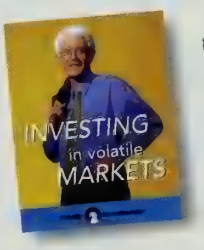


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SOPHISTICATED STOCKHOLM

BELOW: The inventory at Antiqua, a bookstore on the periphery of Östermalm, reflects the passions of its owner, Ulf Egelius, for architecture, decorative arts and city planning.

"Ulf has a particular eye—especially for twentieth-century architecture," says Easton. RIGHT: Books vie for space on shelves, the floor and practically anywhere else.







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House before it was torn down at the end of the nineteenth century to make way for the present one.

A block away is Rehns Antikhandel. Owners Thomas Rehn and Tony Andersson have an eye for unconventional antiques that elicits Easton's admiration. "This is a wonderful, decorative shop with many surprises," says the designer. The store takes up what was once the entrance and lobby of an old cinema. The ceiling is blue, the walls are red, and scuffed wood boards cover the split-level floors. Customers are greeted by a Neoclassical sculpture of a woman, nude except for the boater on her head. There are white rustic chairs in the Gustavian style, with medallion backs, upholstered seats with rounded corners, and curving legs. Swedish rugs with bright-

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> "Swedish country style reflects an interest in a more understated, relaxed look that still succeeds in being elegant."

STOCKHOLM SOURCES

1 B & L WAHLSTRÖM
Nybrogatan 42
46-8-662-33-37
European antiques and furnishings

2 LUNDGRENS ANTIKHANDEL
Kommendörsgatan 20-A
46-8-661-20-00
Swedish and Baltic chandeliers

3 REHNS ANTIKHANDEL
Sibyllegatan 26
46-8-663-34-51
Unusual antiques and artworks

4 POLSTJERNAN ANTIKVITETER
Arsenalsgatan 5
46-8-611-39-73
Antique Baltic furniture

5 ANTIQUA
Karlavägen 12
46-8-10-09-96
Books on architecture, design and city planning

6 LÖFGRENS ANTIK
Storkyrkobrinken 3
46-8-10-19-32
Swedish faience

7 LARS SJÖBERG
c/o National Museum
46-8-5195-4359
Reproductions of antique Swedish furniture

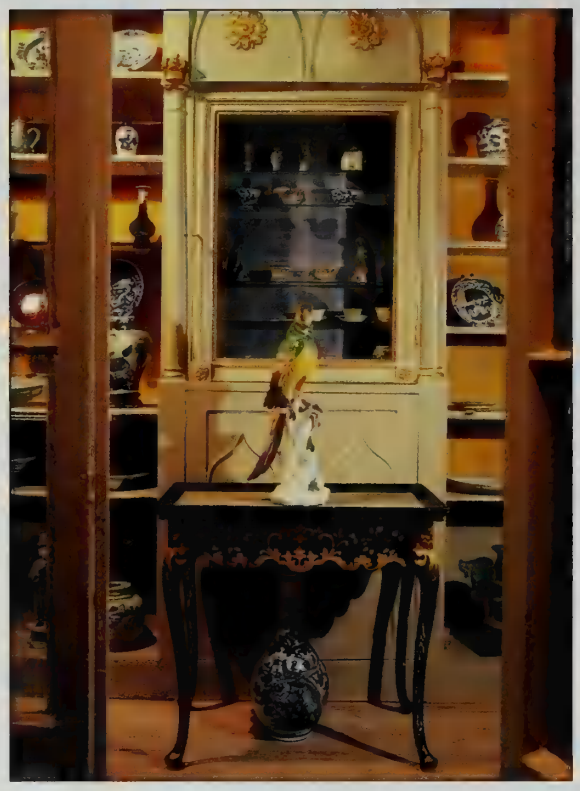

VERSACE
HOME SIGNATURE

SOPHISTICATED STOCKHOLM

BELOW: Easton holds a circa 1650 Chinese porcelain vase while talking to Christer Löfgren outside his shop in Gamla Stan.



RIGHT: At Löfgrens, a German Frauenthal porcelain bird sits on a circa 1760 Swedish Rococo tea table with a ceramic-tile inlay.



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hued geometric patterns are folded and piled up haphazardly. Bulbous nineteenth-century glass wine flagons line a wall. On a pedestal in a corner is the piece that Easton is considering for his Scandinavian client: an oak column carved in Neoclassical style, over ten feet tall, from early-nineteenth-century St. Petersburg. "Its use is purely decorative," he says.

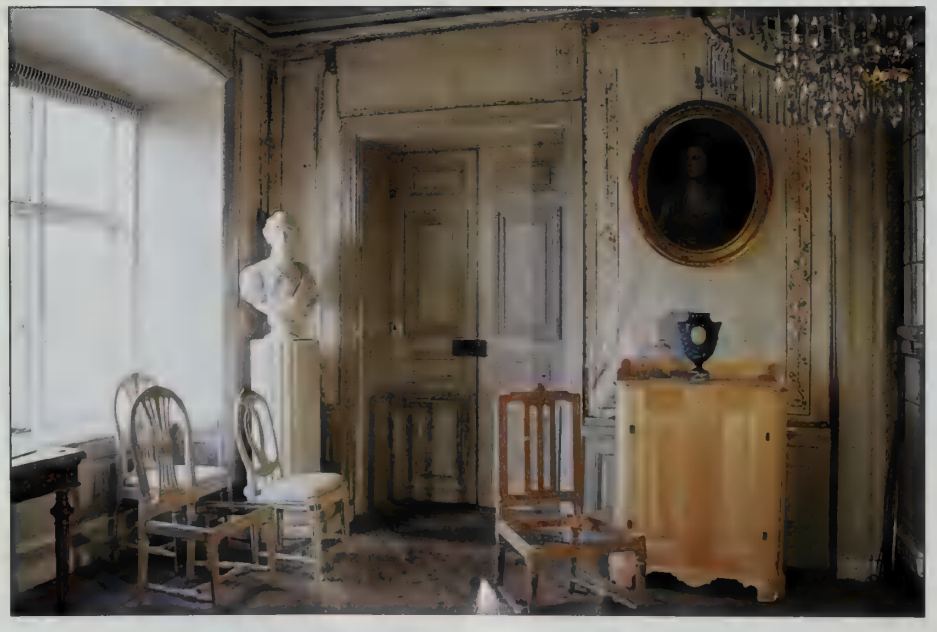
For a late lunch, Easton chooses the nearby Östermalms Saluhall, a red-brick covered market with a medieval look. Besides offering shoppers the freshest farm produce in the city, the Saluhall is a rendezvous for business executives and professionals eager to sample superb seafood in a boisterous, informal setting. The gravlax with boiled potatoes in dill sauce is the traditional standby in the market's two best restaurants, Gerdas Fisk and the adjoining Lisa Elmqvist.

On a second day of shopping and browsing, Easton heads for Polstjernan Antikviteter, in Stockholm's old financial district on the edge of a small sixteenth-century square bounded at either end by bronze copies of Venice's famed horse sculptures. "Polstjernan is in some ways the most refined of Stockholm's antiques shops," says Easton. "The owners have a marvelous collection of Swedish and Baltic furniture, and they also have a nearby warehouse where I can always count on finding something exciting."

Easton has asked Polstjernan's co-owner, Ulf Olsson, to hold for him a late-eighteenth-century console table with a marble top and gilt-wood legs. Other pieces he finds noteworthy on this visit are a set of six Rococo dining chairs and a circa 1790 six-foot-long desk made in St. Petersburg.

Easton's next destination is an architecture and design bookseller, Antiqua, on the northwestern edge of Östermalm, where the neighbor-

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LEFT: Author and historian Lars Sjöberg—"a passionate exponent of the Swedish style"—also makes and repairs furniture in his house outside Stockholm.

ABOVE: Easton and Sjöberg analyze the workmanship of a Swedish chair in the French Neoclassical style. At right is a Swedish Louis XV–style fauteuil.



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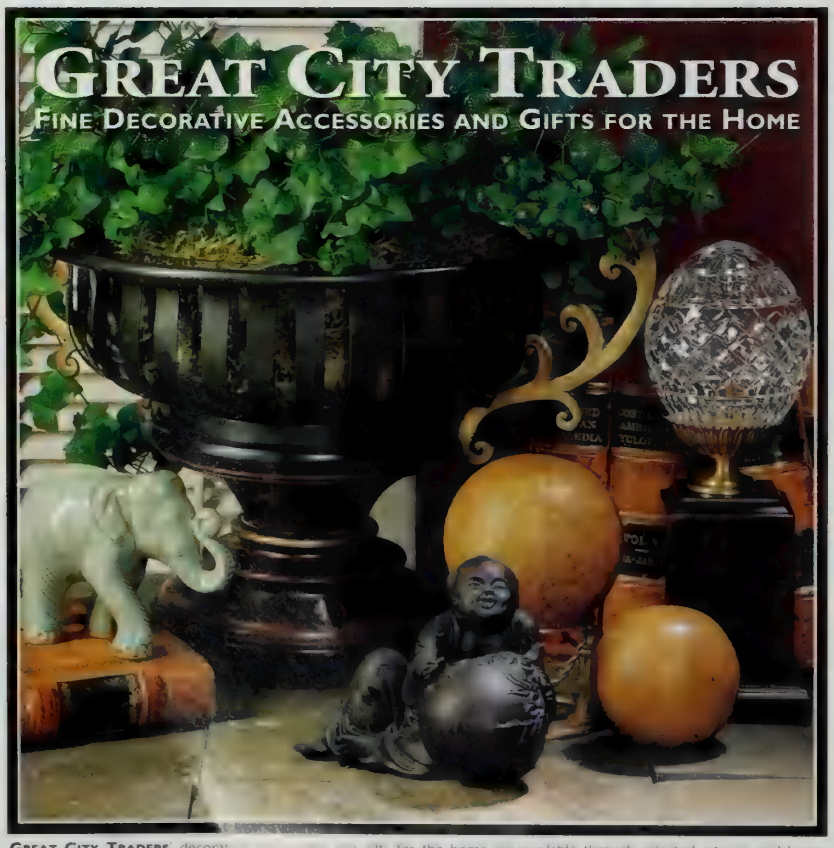
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STOCKHOLM

continued from page 62

could enjoy it only in Sweden. The platter, explains Löfgren, has been deemed by National Museum experts to be of such high quality that its export is prohibited. "No one would have been more surprised than the people at Rörstrand," says the antiques dealer.

On his last full day, Easton drives out of Stockholm toward the city of Södertälje, where he visits one of several manor houses that have been carefully restored by his friend Lars Sjöberg, a curator at the Swedish national art museum as well as coauthor of a book on Swedish design. "Lars is passionate about Swedish furniture and decorative arts," says Easton. In his manor houses, Sjöberg also makes reproductions of classic Swedish furniture, textiles and light fixtures, specializing in styles from the eighteenth century.

When the designer arrives, chairs, tables and other furnishings in various stages of completion are haphazardly stacked throughout the house. Easton is drawn first to a Swedish Louis XV–style fauteuil, but he's particularly taken with an eighteenth-century Swedish porcelain stove and the decoratively painted canvas-covered wall next to it.

> "If you have a passion for both Neoclassical and Scandinavian design, Stockholm is a double whammy."

While Sjöberg's work is primarily for exhibition in museums and galleries, "he's a fantastic source," Easton says, "since he's practically a walking encyclopedia of Swedish design."

Stockholm, David Easton continues, "is just so rich in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century furnishings. And if you have a passion for both Neoclassical and Scandinavian design, it's a double whammy." He'll return soon, he says. "It's such a beautiful city to walk in. It's only an hour-and-a-half flight from almost anywhere else in Europe, and yet it still feels like a secret." □

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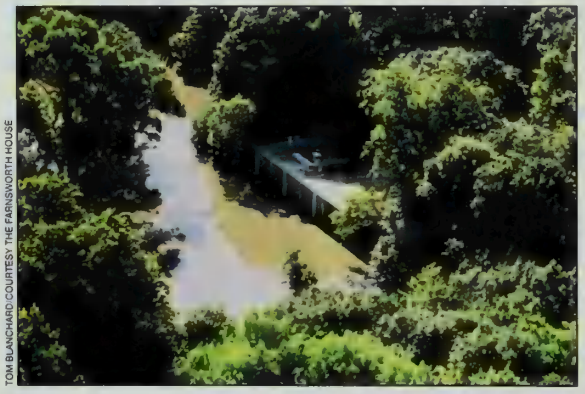
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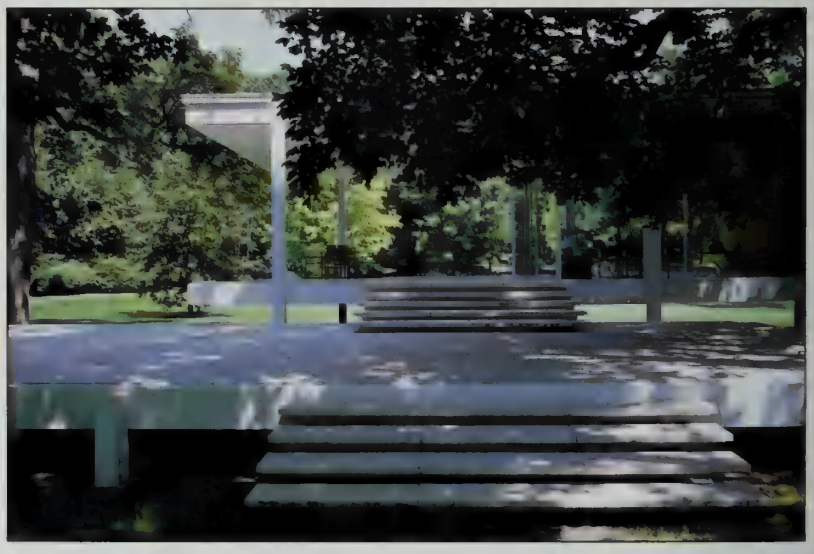
Text by Roland Flamini
After Photography by
Timothy Hursley



RIGHT: The Farnsworth House, the only residence that Mies van der Rohe built in the United States, was completed in 1951 for Chicago nephrologist Edith Farnsworth.



TOM BLANCHARD; COURTESY THE FARNSWORTH HOUSE



When Ludwig Mies van der Rohe began designing the Farnsworth House, on the bank of the Fox River in Plano, Illinois, he researched the highest recorded flood level and discovered it to be three feet. So he suspended the sleek, all-glass pavilion between eight structural steel columns that hold it as if by magnetic force five feet clear of the ground. The device didn't fool Mother Nature for long. In 1954, three years after the house was completed, the river set a new record, and the weekend retreat was flooded. And in July 1996 a sudden cascade of water again swept across the landscape, and this time the house was engulfed.

ABOVE: The house, in Plano, Illinois, sits in the flood plain of the Fox River. In 1996 the river rose and submerged the house in ten feet of water, causing damage to its core.

ABOVE RIGHT: A sugar maple shades the cantilevered stairs that lead to the entrance. Repeated cleaning removed all traces of mud from the travertine marble floors.

In the second disaster, ten-foot-high floods smashed through the glass windows, washing away furniture and leaving behind a messy calling card of mud and silt on the Italian travertine marble slabs that formed the floors of the house and terrace. There was no one home at the time: Peter Palumbo, the present owner, lives in London and visits the building only periodically. "I saw the house five days later," Lord Palumbo says. "By then the mud had been removed, but the house was in a disgusting state. It was a wreck, and it was obvious that it would need drastic restoration."

Drastic enough, he adds,

continued on page 70

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THE FARNSWORTH HOUSE RESTORED

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to require "taking the house apart and putting it together again." The work took almost a year, and so faithfully does the result replicate Mies's original that if the architect were alive and visited the Farnsworth House today, he would find it no different from when he built it for his client, Chicago nephrologist Edith Farnsworth.

The architect of the Seagram headquarters in New York and other landmark commercial projects lived and worked in Chicago from 1938 until his death in 1969, but the Farnsworth House is the only residence that bears the Mies van der Rohe signature in America. At the time, it was hailed as a work of art and the most important private residence completed in the United States since Frank Lloyd Wright built Fallingwater, in Pennsylvania, a dozen years earlier.



KAREN I. HIRSCH

LEFT: At the reception to celebrate the restoration, owners Hayat and Peter Palumbo flank Dirk Lohan, Mies van der Rohe's grandson, who oversaw the process.



KAREN I. HIRSCH

BEFORE

RIGHT: Mies used primavera, or white mahogany, for the core of the house, which had to be completely rebuilt. The flood's high-water mark is visible on the draperies.

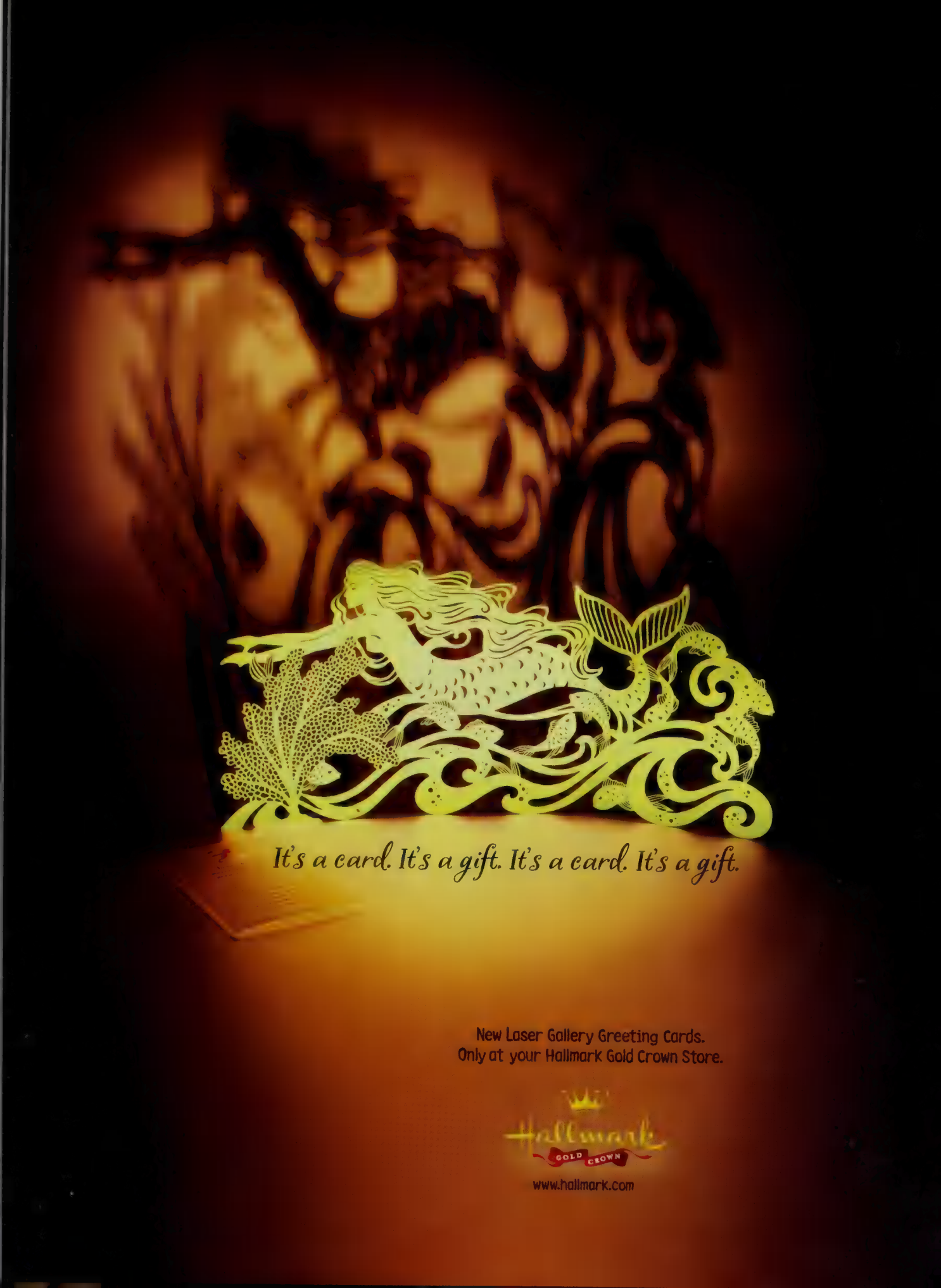
BELOW: Lohan added a travertine hearth to the living room fireplace and brought in some iconic Mies furnishings, such as a leather daybed and the Tugendhat chairs.

The Farnsworth House embodies what Mies meant by his much-quoted phrase *beinahe nichts* ("almost nothing"). His stunningly simple structure is not so much architecture as the abstraction of architecture. One commentator noted that it "looks like a house, just barely." From the inside looking out, the open, glass-walled area (fifty-five feet four inches long and twenty-eight feet eight inches wide) encased in a skeletal frame seems no more than a platform hover-

continued on page 72



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THE FARNSWORTH HOUSE RESTORED

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ing above the ground surrounded by trees, grass and river. On all four sides the pavilion extends into an outdoor space of colors, moods and forms that shifts and changes with the seasons.

As always, Mies's design was a triumph of calibrated precision. The building is planned on a strict grid that measures thirty-three inches by twenty-four inches and conforms to the dimensions of the travertine marble panels or slabs that cover the house and terrace, and so precise is the structure that not one row of tiles had to be trimmed to fit. The twelve steel stanchions that carry the pavilion are each exactly eight tiles apart longitudinally, eight stanchions supporting the house and four for the lower deck. The ends of the structure extend beyond the stanchions to create the

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RIGHT: The black-glass-topped table was in Mies's German Pavilion at the 1929 Barcelona exhibition. His MR chairs surround a teak dining table by Lohan.



BELOW: A dehumidifier and blower ran 24 hours a day for several weeks. "After we cleaned out the mud, the first contractors in were the electricians," says Lord Palumbo.



LEN KOROSKI/COURTESY LOHAN ASSOCIATES



LEFT: A replica teak wardrobe separates the living and sleeping areas. "The simplicity of the design is in fact a distillation of a lifetime of experience," Lord Palumbo notes.


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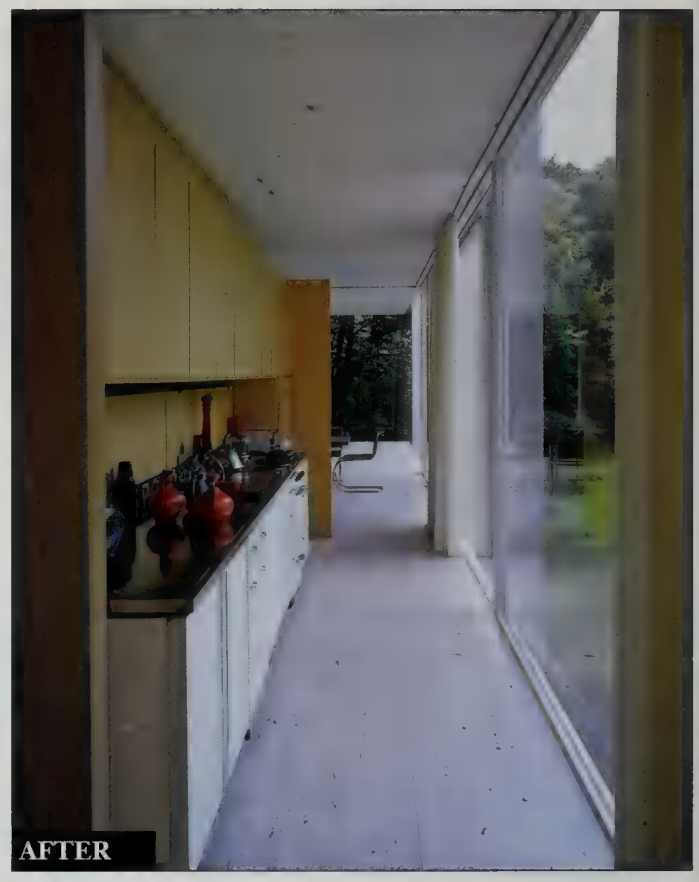
THE FARNSWORTH HOUSE RESTORED

RIGHT: During the yearlong renovation, the steel kitchen was dismantled while the core was being reconstructed. FAR RIGHT: The kitchen flows into the dining area.

BELOW: Barcelona stools in the master bedroom are by hopper windows, the only ones that open to allow cross ventilation. The door leads into the master bath.



KAREN I. HIRSCH



continued from page 72

corners Mies used on most of his Chicago buildings to add light. Baths, kitchen and utilities, including a fireplace, are enclosed in a long and narrow service core running down the middle. The core also does duty as an internal wall, creating separate sections for eating and sleeping.

In fact, given that the house has no interior walls, the separate living spaces are remarkably well orchestrated. The fireplace hearth provides a focal point for the living area; the bedroom is defined by a teak wardrobe and the bed. In the dining area, a teak table is surround-

continued on page 76



BELOW: The steel-frame house, suspended on stilts five feet above ground, has been returned to its former glory, but future floods are still a cause for concern.





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THE FARNSWORTH HOUSE RESTORED

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ed by Mies van der Rohe's MR chairs.

The irony is that Edith Farnsworth grew to hate the house. As the project progressed, her once intimate relationship with Mies soured, and he brought suit against her, claiming she owed him money. She countersued, saying she had been overcharged, but she lost the case after a long trial. When admirers of Mies's work came to see the house, she sometimes chased them off with a shotgun. That did not deter Lord Palumbo, a die-hard Miesian and a friend of the architect's. In the summer of 1968, he says, he "crept under the fence to look at the house and decided there and then to make her an offer." Risking limb, if not life, he resolutely approached the house and rang the doorbell. "I essentially bought the house that afternoon," he says, "but she was a ferocious, difficult woman, and we didn't really complete the deal until 1972."



Far from repelling visitors, Lord Palumbo opened the Farnsworth House to the public, as he has the other architectural icons he has owned—Kentuck Knob, a Frank Lloyd Wright house in rural Pennsylvania, and Les Maisons Jaoul, a Le Corbusier project in the Paris suburb of Neuilly. He furnished the Farnsworth House with familiar Mies-designed furniture. The architect had specified that white silk shantung draperies should be used; Lord Palumbo partially obeyed his instructions, Edith Farnsworth not at all. Peter Palumbo replaced her "awful roller blinds" with off-white cotton draperies.

In the 1996 flood, the teak wardrobe and other pieces of furniture were ruined, as were the draperies. "When we started the restoration, the main question was, could the core be saved?" says Lord Palumbo. "We decided it couldn't. The core was dismantled and thrown away, and we made a new one."

Despite the structure's luminous simplicity, restoring it turned out to be challenging. Lord Palumbo engaged Chicago architect Dirk Lohan, Mies's grandson who took over his studio after his death. Lohan consulted his grandfather's original plans and looked at contemporary photographs to get the color right. Obsessive about quality detail, says Lohan, "Mies had selected exquisite wood veneers for the core and the finest travertine marble from Italy for the floors. He spent a long time matching the veneers. We wanted to re-create that original quality."

Repeated cleaning eventually restored the marble, but finding the same primavera wood (white mahogany) was one of the project's major problems. In the intervening forty-six years since the house was completed, primavera, once plentiful in Mexico and South America, had become almost extinct.

"The real problem was not just find-

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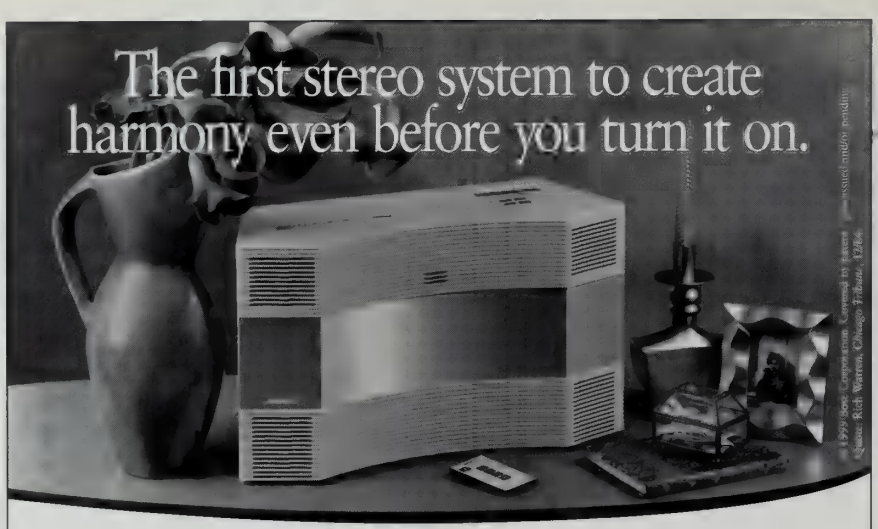
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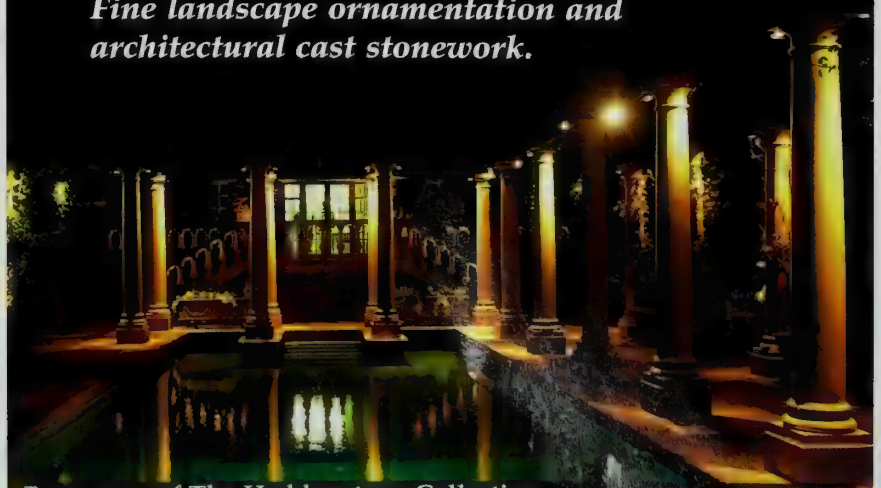
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FARNSWORTH HOUSE

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ing the primavera veneer but making sure the color would be the same as the original," Lohan explains. "We contacted wood veneer houses all over the country." The search took months before the right shade was found in sufficient quantities to rebuild the core.

With little of the furniture salvageable, Dirk Lohan designed a replica of the wardrobe and a Mies-style teak desk, bed and dining table. But the black-glass table with chrome legs near the entrance is genuine Mies van der Rohe and came from the German Pavilion at the 1929 International Exposition in Barcelona, which he designed with all its contents and which first established his international reputation.

If the flooding had a positive side, it was the opportunity to completely restore what many consider an American monument by the century's absolute modern master. (Edith Farnsworth had, for instance, darkened the carefully chosen light wood veneer panels by repeated varnishing.) But the danger from the Fox River remains. "I'm very concerned that the flooding could happen again, and I'm sure Lord Palumbo is too," Lohan says.

> "Mies had selected exquisite wood veneers for the core and the finest travertine marble for the floors. We wanted to re-create that original quality."

He has proposed putting a jack under each of the steel columns so that the house could be elevated hydraulically when the water rises. The jacks would be activated by an automatic alarm system. "It's an ingenious solution, and technically possible," Lord Palumbo says. "I thought about it, but the restoration was very costly, and I decided that it wasn't a priority at the moment." Besides, it might be wiser not to defy Mother Nature. □



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GENTLEMAN'S QUARTERS

A MANHATTAN APARTMENT REGAINS ITS COMPOSURE

Text by Carol Lutfy
Before Photography by Billy Cunningham
After Photography by Michael Moran

CHRISTOPHER NORMAN WALKED BY Alwyn Court, one of the grandes dames of Manhattan's residential apartment buildings, several times a week for years. He had admired its 1909 façade, ornamented with elaborately carved pilasters and terra-cotta salamanders and cherubs. And he had heard the historic lore about the building's lavish apartments, which had once been fitted with stone, marble and fine wood paneling.

Then, in 1995, just as Norman entered the real estate market, a five-room apartment in Alwyn Court became available.

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LEFT: "It needed architectural details," Kevin McNamara, right, says of the Manhattan apartment he redesigned for Christopher Norman, his business partner.

BELOW: The living room. BOTTOM: Lacquered walls provide a background for the art and Chinese porcelain. Fabrics and furnishings throughout from Christopher Norman, Inc.







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GENTLEMAN'S QUARTERS

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"It was an amalgam of everything I'd been looking for. The place had eleven-foot-high ceilings, a fireplace and a fabulous location one block from Carnegie Hall and Central Park," he says. Ironically, what it didn't have was architectural character.

Verging on bankruptcy in 1938, the owners of Alwyn Court had had it gutted and reconfigured, leaving only the exterior walls and the floor beams intact. Like the entire building, Norman's apartment had been stripped of its interior detailing. He wanted to put some of the flavor back.

Norman, who is president of a home furnishings manufacturer and importer that bears his name, entrusted his business partner, forty-year interior design veteran Kevin McNamara, with this task.

"My approach was to clean up the architecture and get a focal point before I started to design," says McNamara. "Then I brought the whole thing together, using the principles of balance and symmetry. I'm not interested in trends; I don't try to be avant-garde. I like to use classical orders as a beginning and Louis XVI as an inspiration for style. At the same time, I embrace some things that are completely contemporary."

Working with designer Edward Gianfrancesco, who had helped to renovate other apartments in the building, McNamara took on the technical and structural problems first. He reworked the kitchen and baths, installed central air-conditioning, enlarged the fireplace and eliminated a window in the living room.

Developing an identity for the apartment was more complicated. He and Norman both wanted the design to integrate the period furniture reproductions that their company handles. But while the two men have been business partners for fifteen years, their tastes still veer in slightly different directions. "I was eager for the apartment to reflect Chris's aesthetic and not mine," says McNamara. With this in mind—and

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TOP: "We wanted to transform the reception hall into a gallery that could also be used for dining," notes Norman. ABOVE: Velvet-covered walls and wainscoting lend a formal tone. "The apartment had a good flow and division of space; we made few changes in that regard," explains McNamara. RIGHT: Crown molding complements the existing high ceiling.

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GENTLEMAN'S QUARTERS

continued from page 84

true to his own signature style—he put in crown moldings throughout. They not only accentuate the height of the ceilings but establish a flexible, if classical, tone that is in keeping with Norman's ideas.

Norman, who was born in Thailand, is partial to Oriental art objects, such as blue-and-white porcelain, but he is also fond of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century French furniture, and he collects Western paintings, especially modern and contemporary works. "I wanted a mix of styles that would provide both comfort and elegance," he explains. "My ideal for the apartment was something serious and serene."

The reception hall, which also functions as a gallery and dining area, is the apartment's most formal space. McNamara and Norman planned it around an intricately carved Chippendale-style giltwood mirror and a gilt Georgian-style side table. A gilt-bronze-and-crystal eighteenth-century-style Russian chandelier further enlivens the windowless room.

For all of its opulence, however, the room has a built-in flexibility that makes it cozy. A Knole-style sofa and a folding lacquered-gunmetal table become an impromptu spot for dining. "Instead of turning it into a full dining room with a formal pedestal table," Norman says, "I wanted to keep the space as open as possible."

The reception hall leads into the living room, with its leather-brown-lacquered

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TOP: The library. TOP RIGHT: "The eighteenth-century document print creates a feeling of serenity," McNamara points out. The 19th-century paintings of dragoons are by John Ferneley, Jr.

ABOVE: The master bedroom. RIGHT: "A contemporary large-checked wallcovering acts as a foil for the art, the antique and an- furniture t

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Some medicines can change the way VIAGRA works. Tell your doctor about **any medicines** you are taking. Do not start taking any new medicines before checking with your doctor or pharmacist. This includes prescription and nonprescription medicines or remedies. Remember, VIAGRA should never be used with medicines that contain nitrates (see *VIAGRA Is Not for Everyone*). VIAGRA should not be used with any other medical treatments that cause erections. These treatments include pills, medicines that are injected or inserted into the penis, implants or vacuum pumps.

Finding the Right Dose for You

You will learn how well VIAGRA works for you through your personal experience. If you do not get the results you expect, talk with your doctor. VIAGRA comes in different doses (25 mg, 50 mg and 100 mg). You and your doctor can determine the dose that works best for you.

- Do not take more VIAGRA than your doctor prescribes.
- If you think you need a larger dose of VIAGRA, check with your doctor.
- VIAGRA should not be taken more than once a day.

If you are older than age 65, or have serious liver or kidney problems, your doctor may start you at the lowest dose (25 mg) of VIAGRA.

How To Take VIAGRA

Take VIAGRA about one hour before you plan to have sex. Beginning in about 30 minutes and for up to 4 hours, VIAGRA can help you get an erection if you are sexually excited. If you take VIAGRA after a high-fat meal (such as a cheeseburger and french fries), the medicine may take a little longer to start working. VIAGRA can help you get an erection when you are sexually excited. You will not get an erection just by taking the pill.

Possible Side Effects

Like all medicines, VIAGRA can cause some side effects. These effects are usually mild and do not last long. Some of these side effects are more likely to occur with higher doses. The most common side effects of VIAGRA are headache, flushing of the face, and upset stomach.

Less common side effects that may occur are temporary changes in color vision (such as trouble telling the difference between blue and green objects or having a blue color tinge to them), eyes being more sensitive to light, or blurred vision. In extremely rare instances, men may have an erection that lasts many hours. You should call a doctor immediately if you ever have an erection that lasts more than four hours (see *How Sex Affects the Body*). VIAGRA may cause other side effects besides those listed on this sheet. If you want more information or develop any side effects or symptoms you are concerned about, call your doctor.

Accidental Overdose

In case of accidental overdose, call your doctor right away.

Storing VIAGRA

Keep VIAGRA out of the reach of children. Keep VIAGRA in its original container. Store at room temperature (59°-86°F or 15°-30°C).

For More Information on VIAGRA

VIAGRA is a prescription medicine used to treat erectile dysfunction. Only your doctor can decide if it is right for you. This sheet is only a summary. If you have any questions or want more information about VIAGRA, talk with your doctor or pharmacist or call 1-888-4VIAGRA.

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walls and rich array of paintings. Both men agree that it captures the combination of drama and serenity they were striving for in the apartment as a whole. "It's a nighttime room. The dark walls create an intimate mood and point up architectural details rather well," notes McNamara. "The paintings really talk to you," adds Norman. "That's what I love about the room."

Before he tackled the issue of design, McNamara made two critical changes to the living room. He eliminated one of the three windows on the western exposure. He also replaced the original mantelpiece with one that is larger and Neoclassical in style, establishing one of the primary motifs for the room. McNamara then devised a roughly symmetrical plan in which the central seating area is a counterpoint to the fireplace opposite it. "Furniture arrangements are fairly basic in my mind. They come together when the architectural bones of an apartment are right," he says.

Among the dozen or so paintings and works on paper are a 1960 Picasso etching, a nineteenth-century gouache by Winslow Homer and seventeenth-century Italian drawings. "My mother's an artist, so it's a long-standing interest," says Norman, "but I've been collecting on an ever-increasing scale."

The collection spills into the bedroom, where a Jim Dine print and a Georges Braque painting commingle with a mahogany four-poster and a Chippendale-style chest.

Next to the bedroom is what Norman calls the Red Room, a library and sitting room that is part of the suite. "The idea was for the two rooms to have individual identities but to function as a single unit," he explains. "We linked them by using chinoiserie patterns for upholstery, wall treatments and draperies." The rooms also share a mixture of contemporary and classical elements. In the library, lacquered-brass bookcases offset a Regency-style chair and a Louis XVI–style desk.

What unites the entire apartment, however, is the fresh architectural detailing conceived by Kevin McNamara to evoke the building's illustrious past. "We wanted the interior to hint at the architectural exuberance of the exterior," says the designer. "But it's all very low-key. Comfort is at least as important as style." □



Edward Ferrell 325-68



Edward Ferrell 234



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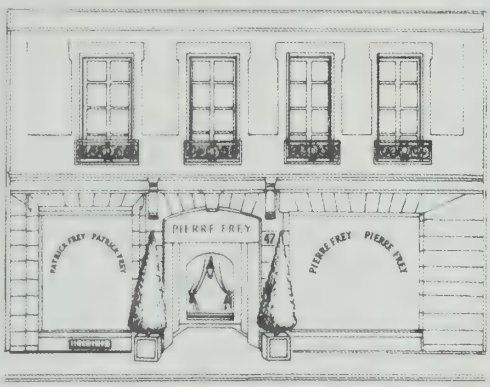
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VOLVO'S NEW LOOK

THE S80 LEAVES BOXINESS BEHIND



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The new Volvo S80 marks a departure for the Swedish manufacturer. Though the car retains some design elements, its sleekness seems a far cry from Volvo's boxy image.

By Paul Goldberger

WELL, YOU CAN SAY this for the new Volvo S80—it is one secure car. I was driving one of the first of these new models last fall when, remembering that I had forgotten something, I shut the door and went inside for a moment, leaving the keys on the front seat. When I returned, the Volvo was locked tight. How that happened, I never quite figured out, although I did recall touching the automatic locking button a few minutes earlier while searching for the trunk release. Since the driver's door had been wide open at the time, I didn't give it a second thought. In any case, whether the fault was mine or the Volvo's hardly mattered, because nothing short of a visit from a Volvo representative bearing a spare key was going to get this car open. When I called Volvo's roadside service, the agent said that there was nothing his mechanics could do, "since we don't have the equipment for this high-tech system." He suggested I call a locksmith. "But be sure he's trained in dealing with laser-cut keys, or he could do more damage than good."

Several locksmiths decided that discretion was the better part of automotive valor and refused to come, citing their inability to handle the special keys and their fear, moreover, that if they tried to jimmy open the door they would end up setting off the side-mounted air bag. "I'd talk to someone at Volvo," the most honest of the bunch told me, as I stared through the locked door at the front seat, which contained my notes for a pending story, two books and my son's hockey equipment. All of these items had suddenly taken on the air of the crown jewels, protected as they were behind heavy-duty glass and high-security locks.

In normal life, all of this security is a good thing: You can certainly rest assured that no thief will casually slip his way into this car. And if you were the actual owner of an S80, rather than the driver of a car loaned from Volvo's own fleet, as I was, you would be likely to have a spare key tucked away in a kitchen drawer to protect you from my problem. Still, it's hard to wonder if we haven't, in the name of convenience, made cars a little *too* lockable. It's all well and good to be able to push a button on a remote key fob or touch a button, but there was a certain comfort in the old-fashioned system requiring that the driver's door be locked manually.

I am happy to say that try-

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The S80 is the first Volvo that can and should be talked about as a peer of Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Audi and Lexus.


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ARTHUR BRETT

VOLVO'S NEW LOOK

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ing to get in was not the only thing I did with the new S80. I took considerably more pleasure in looking at the car, both inside and out, and driving it. For some time now Volvo has been moving cautiously away from the severe, boxy designs that were its



LEFT: The S80's design emphasizes spaciousness, providing 42 legroom inches in the front and 36 legroom inches in the rear, plus a 14-cubic-foot trunk.

BELOW LEFT: Safety features include inflatable side curtains that protect against head injuries and front seats designed to minimize whiplash trauma.

bread and butter for decades; with the S80, Volvo's new visual identity finally achieves some sense of wholeness, even maturity. This is the first Volvo whose lines flow gracefully, and it is the first Volvo in modern times—certainly the first one since the P1800 coupe of the early 1960s—that can honestly be called beautiful.

A beautiful Volvo? Isn't that an oxymoron? Until now, yes. Volvos were sensible, they were safe, they were practical, they were well engineered, and they could often be [illegible]ited and even fast—but [illegible] were not beautiful. [illegible] it was hard not to [illegible] the Swedes were [illegible] uspicious of cars that [illegible] beautiful.

Vo[illegible]-established appeal to [illegible] middle-class families, how[illegible] obscured a serious liability ... the company's approach to design: It was conservative to a fault and fearful of change. Volvo was late to come to front-wheel drive (though it now offers only front-wheel- and



all-wheel-drive cars), and the company missed out entirely on a market it could have dominated, the sport utility vehicle. Many of the people who now drive Jeep Cherokees and Ford Explorers are dead ringers for Volvo owners, and I suspect many of them even were Volvo owners once upon a time. Volvo lost them by acting as if the sport utility vehicle were a passing fad. While the financial resources of an independent Swedish automaker are hardly those of Daimler-Benz, it's hard not to believe that had Volvo tried to build a four-wheel-drive sport utility vehicle, as Mercedes-Benz did with the M-Class, it could have done even better.

The S80, however, is the first Volvo that can and should be talked about as a peer of Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Audi and Lexus. It was designed under the supervision of Peter Horbury, Volvo's design director for the last eight years, a Britisher who has been gradually luring the company out of its box (the sleek C70 coupe is also his); but much of the design is the work of Doug Frasher, an American based in Volvo's California design studio (and who designed the concept car that formed the basis for the S80), and José L. Diaz de la Vega, a Mexican who oversaw the design of the interiors, color and trim.

All of these men have a striking degree of respect for the traditions of Volvo. Indeed, their real accomplishment is the subtlety with which they have melded what might be called Volvoness with a smoother, more aerodynamic line; for all that the S80 looks like no other Volvo, it unmistakably still looks like a Volvo. The vertical grille with its diagonal band is there, but appended to a softer, more rounded mass; the sharpness and verticality of the rear end recalls recent Volvos, even if its lines and voluptuously shaped taillights are altogether new. Also new is the flowing roofline, but in its cleanness and directness it, too, harks back to the Volvo aesthetic.

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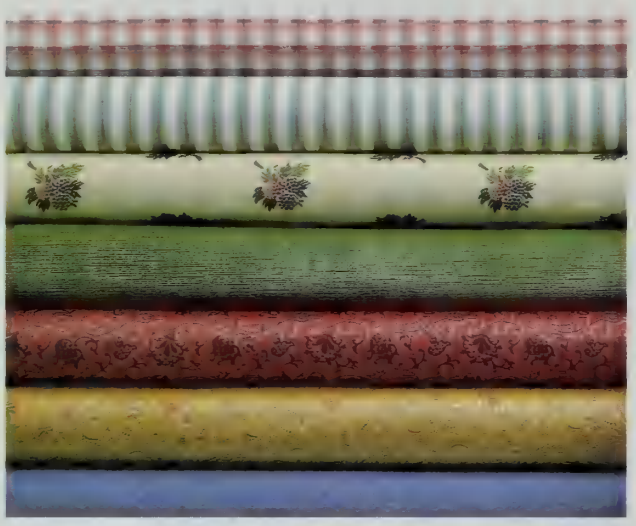
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VOLVO'S NEW LOOK

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And the parts fit together naturally. This is not a hybrid of two design sensibilities but a respectful, knowledgeable reinterpretation of Volvo traditions within the design language of this moment. When you look at the S80 by itself, it seems to have a comradeship with the sleekest cars on the road, and yet when you see it next to other recent Volvos, it seems equally connected to them. While Peter Horbury has produced a more radical rethinking of the five-passenger sedan than anything his counterpart at BMW, Chris Bangle, has designed, both men are after essentially the same thing—bringing innovation to a venerable nameplate without overturning its basic identity.

Inside, the S80 is spectacularly comfortable, and luxurious without ever seeming opulent. Posh and showy are not Volvoesque, but neither is spartan, and the interior of the S80, more than that of any previous Volvo, emanates an air not just of quality but of dignity. Volvo has always made excellent seats, and the S80's are, miraculously, both soft and firm. The lines of the dashboard are more rounded than in previous Volvos, and the controls have a typeface that looks something like the font used on the old maps of the London Underground—clear, easy to read and with just the right touch of eccentricity. The best control of all, however, needs no typeface whatsoever: It is a profile of a seated figure, with its head, torso and legs each a separate button directing air to the top, middle or bottom of the cabin.

And to drive? The handling is tight, as on all Volvos, but smoother and more nimble, and the 268-horsepower, six-cylinder engine can accelerate from zero to 60 in 6.7 seconds, according to Volvo. All of the attention the company has traditionally given to safety remains here, with the addition of a side-impact inflatable curtain and what Volvo calls the Whiplash Protection System in the seats. Driving a Volvo has always made one feel somewhat virtuous; with the S80, the moment has at last come when one can possess virtue and indulgence simultaneously. Finally, a Volvo fit not only for the road but for the eyes. □



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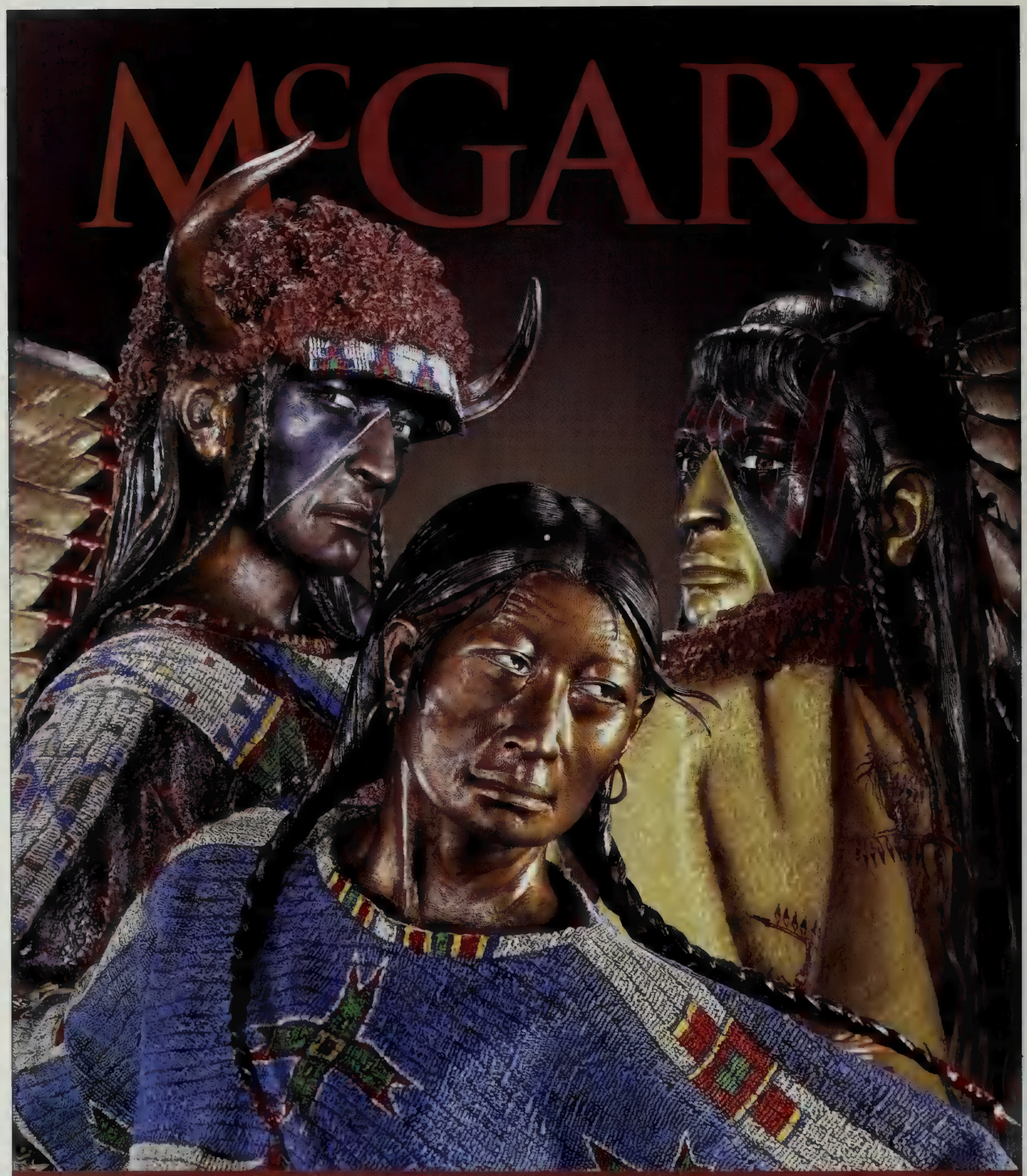
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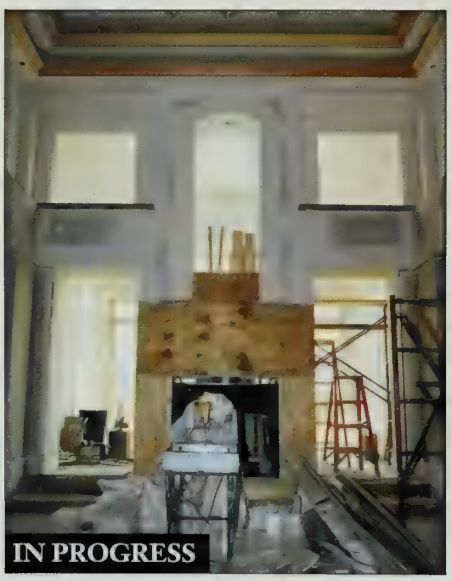
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ABOVE: The plain family room of a Minneapolis residence, which architect Tim R. Bjella remodeled using classical elements.

BELOW: Bjella transformed the space into a living room. RIGHT: He built a new fireplace and added a family room behind it.





Text by Suzanne Stephens
After Photography by Karen Melvin

REMODELING A NEW HOUSE MAY seem a bit odd. Most remodelings, after all, involve fixer-uppers—down-at-the-heels structures long on architectural character, short on comfort. One entrepreneur and his wife, however, decided to drastically overhaul their new residence, a large house clad in wood siding and topped with gabled and hip roofs, tucked away in a secluded suburb outside Minneapolis. "We loved the neighborhood and the property," the husband says. "But I wanted the kind of old castlelike stone place you see on estates." The interiors were distinguished only by gypsumboard walls and wood floors, with a semiopen plan typical of most recent residential development. Even though it had high ceilings and generous proportions, "there wasn't enough *architecture*," the husband explains.

The owners resolved to redo the exterior in heavily textured limestone and sought out architect Tim R. Bjella to create something remarkable inside. "We had definite ideas about what we wanted," says the husband, who, like his wife, is especially fond of Greek and Roman architecture.

"Since the interiors were so bland," says Bjella, "we decided to start from square one and gut the entire house, with the exception of the bedrooms." The clients and the architect opted to

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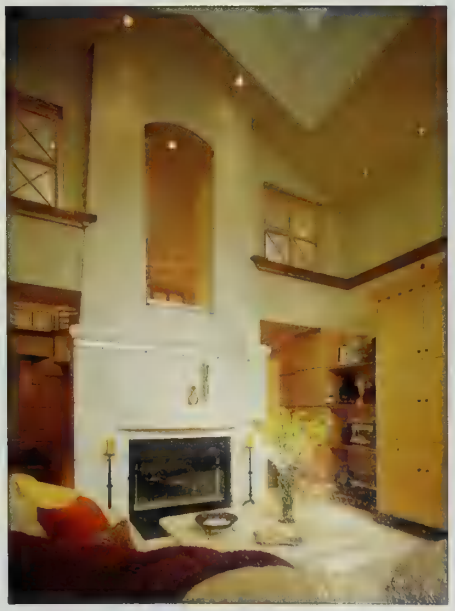
MINNEAPOLIS MAKEOVER



ABOVE: The architect divided the disproportionately high living room walls. RIGHT: Columns and a balcony give the room "a sense of permanence and formality."



BELOW: In the family room, Bjella clad the double-sided fireplace in travertine marble and designed the shelves and an armoire in the Biedermeier style.



"Since the interiors were so bland, we decided to start from square one and gut the entire house, with the exception of the bedrooms."

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keep the same sequence and configuration of spaces to avoid making serious structural changes, but the modifications were still radical: Walls were rebuilt, wood floors removed and the function of some rooms altered. "My wife and I wanted living quarters that were architecturally beautiful on their own, apart from furniture and fabrics," the husband says.

By adding maple wall paneling, cabinets and custom-built furniture, and by integrating classical architectural elements such as columns, coffers and crown moldings, Bjella was able to dramatically transform the interior.

As before, the front door opens onto an entrance hall, which has been reconstituted as a classically inspired space evocative of a grand town house, with a limestone-and-black-granite floor, a striking lacquered-steel balustrade and

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MINNEAPOLIS MAKEOVER

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plaster-coated walls. The Old World character is enhanced by two columns, painted with a dark metallic finish, that frame the entrance to the library.

At the end of the hall is the living room, which was once the family room. Since the entrance to it was not aligned with the hall in the true classical tradition, Bjella found ways to direct the path of circulation to this central area. He created an archway on one side of the stair, marked by a small black-granite keystone. Beyond that is a curved freestanding wall in maple. A visitor passing through the archway is diverted to the left of this screen and enters a portal into the living room, directly opposite the fireplace. After such a perambulation, the eighteen-foot-high space comes as an extraordinary surprise.





LEFT: A simple opening connected the dining room and kitchen. BELOW: "We wanted a passageway that would visually shield the kitchen, so we built a ceremonious archway."

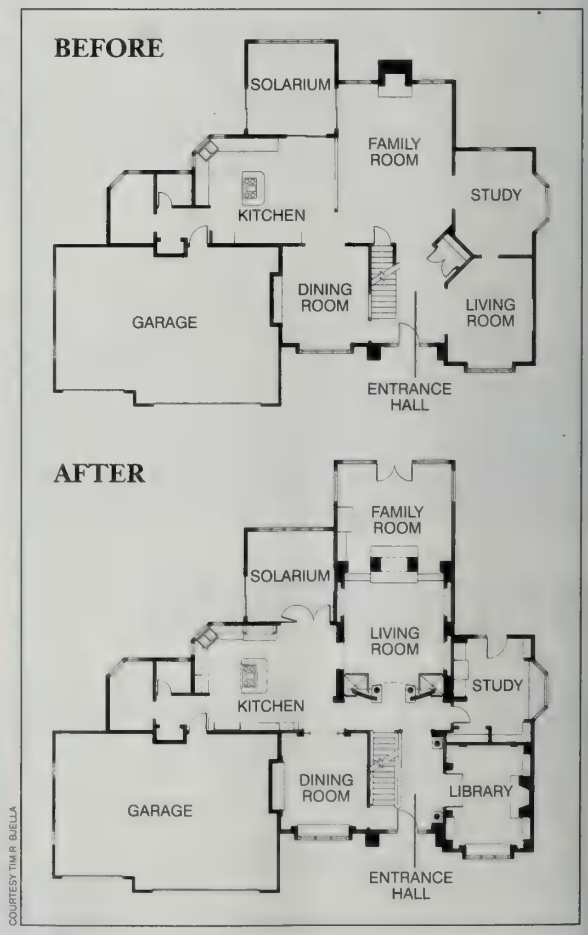
"A lot was done against the rules," says Bjella (above). BELOW RIGHT: "We chopped up the large main room and closed off the kitchen, but it actually makes the house feel bigger."

In its previous life, the living room had been open to the kitchen; Bjella completely walled it in to give it a sense of formality. He designed the walls so that they appear to be two stories high, the second of which looks like a mezzanine with sandblasted windows, a handrail (actually a crown molding) and a parapet-like ledge. "The original ceiling was too high for its width," Bjella points out. "Subdividing the wall eliminated this disparity."

The architect also slightly reduced the size of the room by thickening the walls on the lower level with maple panels. Between these wood sections are re-

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MINNEAPOLIS MAKEOVER

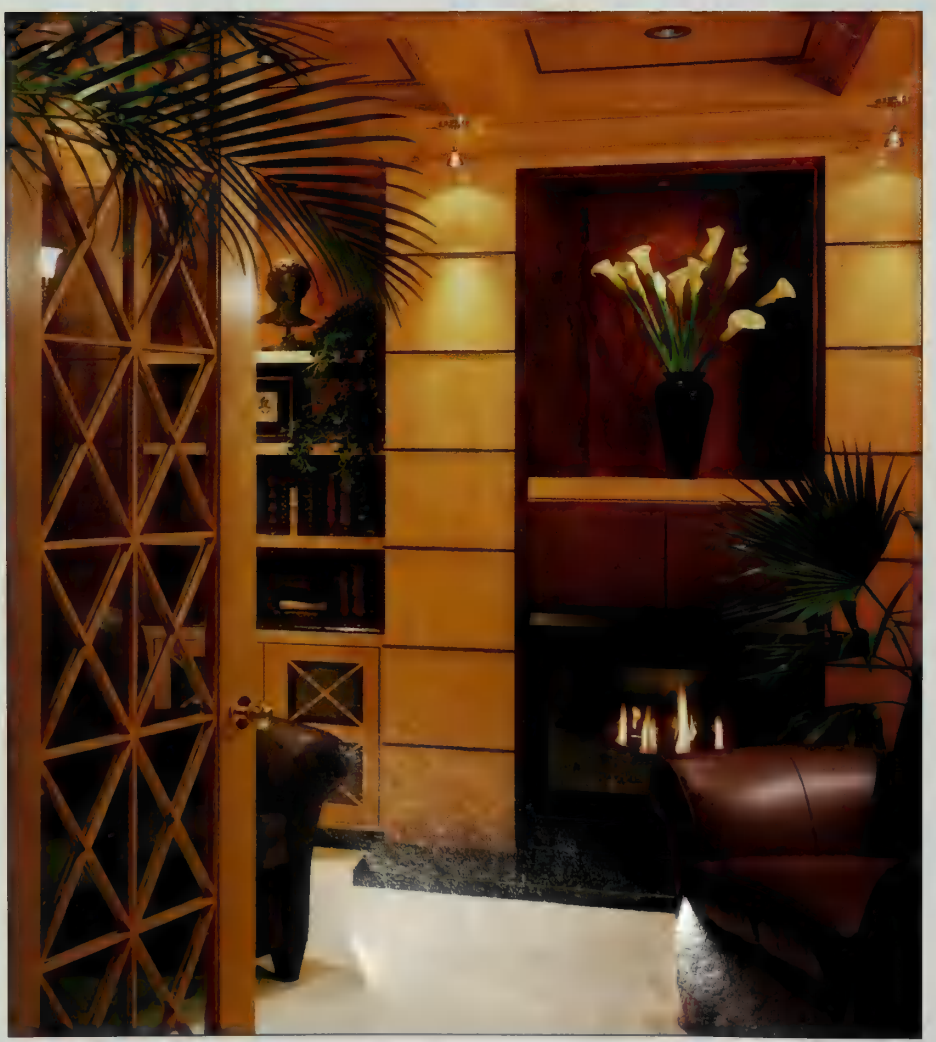
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cesses coated with a plaster finish that resembles stone. "We wanted to re-create the romance of an Italian villa," says Bjella. "By enclosing the room with a warm material like wood, we could give it a more intimate feeling."

At the rear of the living room, on the other side of the fireplace, Bjella built a similarly scaled extension that now functions as the family room. Windows on three walls overlooking the garden and a series of skylights allow ample natural light into the informal space. "In the winter we love to sit here at night when it's snowing," says the husband. "We have the fire going and floodlights on the trees outside. The effect is wonderful."







ABOVE LEFT: "The original kitchen wasn't very distinctive," the architect notes. ABOVE: "We modulated the heights and rhythm of the cabinets and added classical details."

LEFT: In the library, the architect created an intimate space with a coffered ceiling and paneling in maple, and umber-colored walls. Glass-paned doors offer a view of the hall.

Since the fireplace separates the living and family rooms, Bjella designed it to face in both directions, with one large opening carved into the chimney. This towering totemic object, clad in travertine marble, offers glimpses of one room from the other, while passageways on each side link the two spaces and permit light to enter from the family room. "But each area still has its own identity," says Bjella.

The former living room has been reincarnated as a library. "I wanted it to look like a reading room in a men's club, where you retire for your cognac

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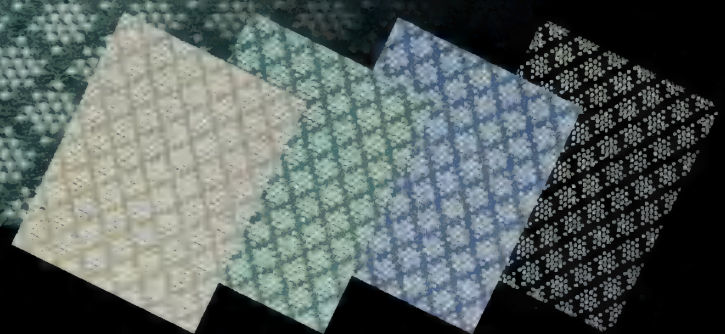
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MINNEAPOLIS MAKEOVER

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and cigar," says the husband. Bjella gave the small space depth and character with a coffered ceiling and shelves in maple and a fireplace. "This is where I read and have privacy," the husband adds. "And I can still keep an eye on the outside world because of the glass-paned doors."

The dining room remains in its original place, connected to the kitchen by an archway. A barrel-vaulted dropped ceiling creates a room-within-a-room for the table and chairs; the rest of the furniture, such as the large maple sideboard and the window seat, fits into alcoves.

The kitchen was the last area to be transformed. At first only a new limestone floor was planned. But once the rest had been redesigned, more was needed. Now maple cabinets with Biedermeier-influenced details, black-granite counters and a cornice connect it visually to other parts of the house.

With all these changes, the obvious question still lingers: Would it not have been easier to simply build a new house? "In a sense, yes," the husband says. "But the transformation was fun." A hands-on kind of client, he actually lived on the site and consulted with workers and craftsmen every day before going to his office. "My wife and kids stayed with her parents some of the time, but I wanted to be here," he says. "At one point after the interior had been gutted, I thought it best not to look down at the mess all around me, nor up at the gaping hole in the ceiling—just straight ahead." □

"We wanted to re-create the romance of an Italian villa," says Bjella. "By enclosing the room with a warm material like wood, we could give it a more intimate feeling."



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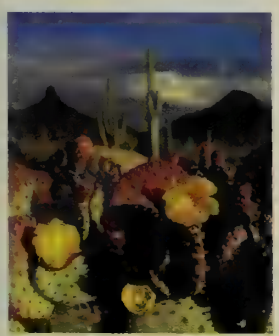
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COMPUTERS IN THE KITCHEN?

THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY FOR THE COOK

By Nicholas von Hoffman

In the kitchens of Electroland, Before is showing a reluctance to move out of the way so that After can come in. The upheavals, the new life routines and the blinding future vistas that electronics have brought to every part of life, from Wall Street to the playroom, are less visible in the kitchen. No revolution is going on there.



JON CONRAD

Well, almost none. Just seeping onto the market is an electronic method of cooking called lightwave cooking, "which uses light as the energy source rather than air," explains Clifford S. Adams, president and CEO of Quadlux, the company that is responsible for the electronic part of the Wolf/FlashBake oven. With its chunky, solid stainless-steel case, the oven, which Quadlux distributes through Wolf dealers, looks not unlike a beefed-up supermicrowave.

FlashBake, let us emphasize, is decidedly not a microwave, one of the earliest —if not the very first—attempts by the Electrolites to get into the American kitchen. The results, as anyone who has used a microwave for anything more complicated than warming up a cup of coffee will aver, are mixed. Chiefly, what the microwave has to offer is the speed of the zap, but more often than not it brings forth a specimen of mush, or near food, that is hot enough, except for the little cold spots that sometimes linger. But cooks who won't allow even a microwave in their kitchens may want to let FlashBake in.

"This is really the first change or improvement in technology that has taken place in probably fifty years —that is, since the invention of microwave ovens just after World War Two," says Adams. "Until recently there have only been two ways in which you could use ovens for cooking food: One was thermal technology, which is the circulation of air that heats the walls, floor and ceiling of an oven and cooks food from the outside in; the other was microwave technology, whereby microwaves penetrate the skin of the food and agitate water molecules. The limitation of a microwave is that when the temperature of the water gets to two hundred and twelve degrees, the water turns to steam and the cooking process stops."

Now comes a third means of cooking—by the use of heat generated from tungsten halogen lamps. The lamps, which go on and off according to what food you're cooking and how you want it cooked, are controlled by a computer chip. "The oven is run by a microprocessor and proprietary software that controls the length of time the lights are on and sequences those lights so you get an even finish and a texture similar to what you would get from a thermal oven," says Adams, reassuring the skeptical, who know what a microwave can do to a pizza crust.

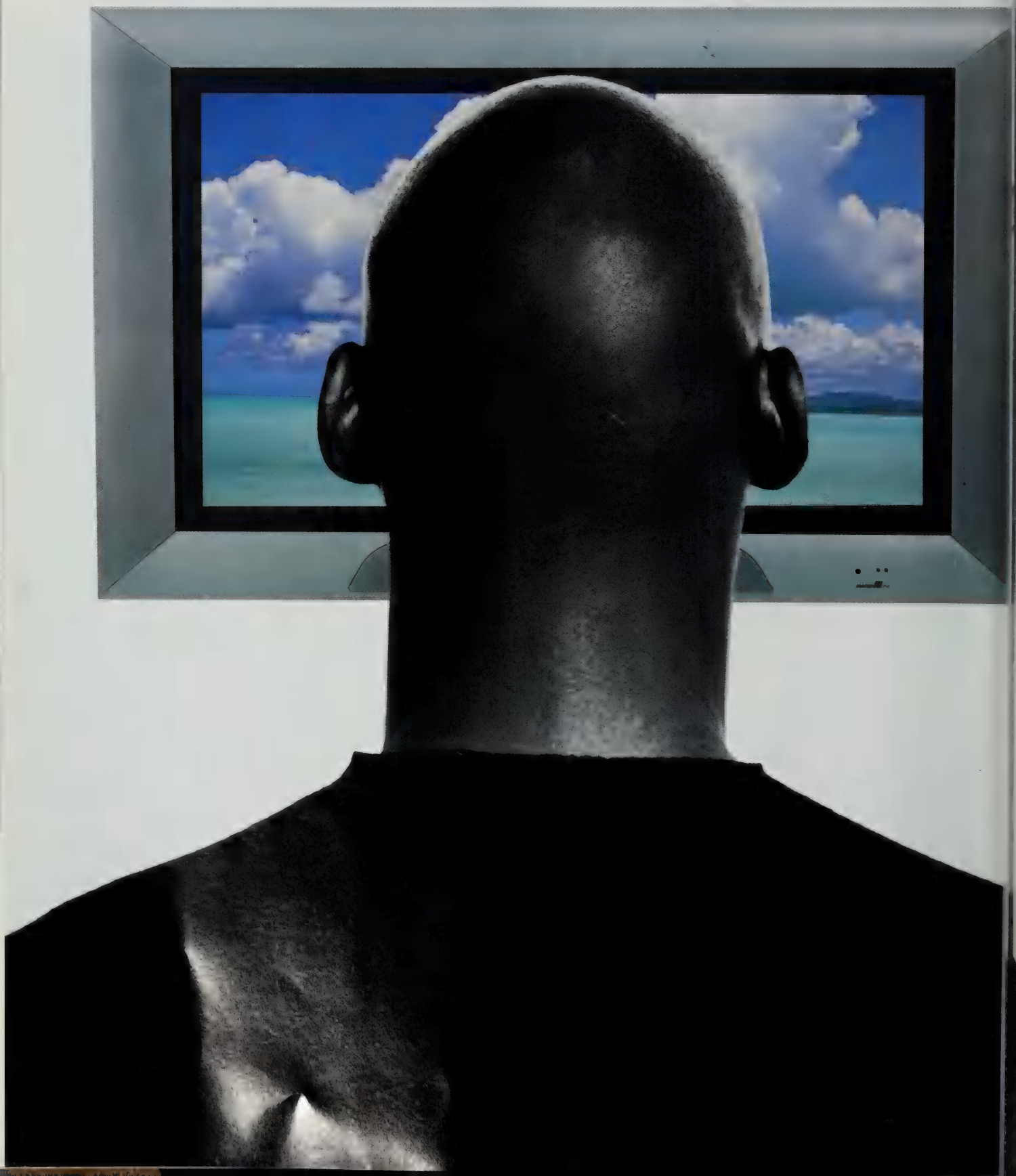
The cooking process partakes of an oven and also of a microwave but is neither, being a thing of its own. "The FlashBake technology is somewhat similar to microwave technology in that it penetrates the skin of the food, much like when you put a flashlight, say, under your thumb and you can see the redness," Adams explains. "As the light penetrates the food, it passes through the water molecules because they're transparent, and it agitates the other molecules with visible and near-visible light. That creates heat, which allows the food to cook from the inside out, with the infrared light browning the outside. What results is similar to what you'd expect from a conventional thermal oven, but you get that in about half the time."

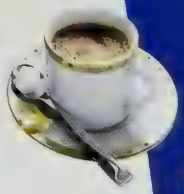
Women of earlier times would have fallen on their knees and bowed down to a FlashBake oven. Until the years immediately after the Civil War, American women commonly did their cooking in the fireplace. If toddlers were in danger of falling in the fire, women themselves were being scarred and burned in the course of stirring a pot, adjusting it or pulling it out of the hot, cavernous hole around which the life of the family played itself out. "Some women baked on their hearths either with a reflector oven or 'roasting kitchen,' a boxlike

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COMPUTERS IN THE KITCHEN?

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utensil on legs usually used for roasting birds, or with a Dutch oven for rolls and biscuits, a strong covered iron kettle on legs, around which coals were placed," writes historian Susan Strasser in *Never Done: A History of American Housework.*

It is said that the only two significant advances in the kitchen during the latter part of the last century were the Dover geared eggbeater and the cast-iron stove, which was an ineffable advance over fireplace cooking but still no morning in bed for farm housewives. Whether a family bought the basic Southern Sunshine Cook stove at $5.97 from Sears, Roebuck & Company or the deluxe Family Sunshine Range at $48, cooking on iron stoves required much work, including cleaning them out, fetching wood or coal, feeding them fuel and sieving some of the ashes to make soap and disposing of the rest.

Imagine how these women would react to the FlashBake, which has sensors that read what kind of a pot you are cooking in and which will learn your preferences so that all you have to do when it broils or grills your steak is to turn it over when it tells you to. The FlashBake, Adams claims without the slightest tone of equivocation in his voice, even does popcorn better than its rivals because it takes longer to burn the kernels. It will also make toast, and you can use metal pots and pans in it, but the paper and plastic containers that work for microwaves will burn up or melt. The oven does not need to be vented, and it will operate on ordinary current. Prices start at around $1,600. For information on where to buy a FlashBake, you may call 800/THE-OVEN.

> Lightwave cooking "uses light as the energy source rather than air."

Viking, one of the top-rung kitchen appliance companies, is using electronics quite sparingly. "On our ovens we haven't gone into touch-pad controls or anything like that," says Jane Crump, Viking's spokeswoman. "Our product is geared toward heavy-duty knobs. The touch pad doesn't go with the look or the type of product that we're putting out, which is very durable."

Miele, Gaggenau, Sub-Zero and other high-end appliance makers appear to think along the same lines Viking does. The substantial, stainless-steel look, suggestive of the heavy-duty equipment demanded by professional chefs, is the style of the hour, with electronics kept in the background. It seems that the more people rely on takeout and the more the kitchen is used as a room for

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"The soul of the apartment is in the carpet"



A 19th century Caucasian rug measuring 9'6" x 4'6" of enormous vitality and imagination. The three central motifs which are drawn on a tete-de-negre ground seem to anchor the rug while all around are creations that are whimsical in nature and child like in concept. The major border of burnished gold has symmetrically placed floral designs intertwined within a series of rectilinear branches. Varying shades of taupe, cocoa and walnut are accompanied by accents of maize, old ivory, beige and cognac all of which are significantly enhanced by the liberal use of a denim blue running throughout.
Visually, this piece embodies the magic inherent in the notion of the flying carpet.

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COMPUTERS IN THE KITCHEN?

continued from page 126

removing food from cardboard and plastic boxes, the greater the pleasure at having massive appliances. Perhaps they represent a promise by their owners to themselves that someday they will heft one of their gourmet cookbooks and begin the long-deferred voyage of gastronomic adventure.

A salesman at Gringer & Sons, one of New York's largest appliance dealers, recently told me that his customers, women especially, shy away from machines loudly bragging that they are loaded with electronic doohickeys: too complicated, too superfluous and too unreliable. Women, who still seem to be electro-averse compared with men, may be the decisive voices in choosing what goes into the kitchen.

As electronics creep into the kitchen, it becomes possible to control appliances in new ways. A few years ago controls more elaborate than a toggle switch were extremely expensive. We are beginning to see houses in the middle price range electronically wired for about a dollar a square foot, which makes it possible for a company like Savoy Automation of Westborough, Massachusetts, to put controls of an advanced sort in your house. Using a computer hidden in a closet and touch-screen monitors, people with no knowledge or interest in the engineering tangle that entrances the citizens of Electroland may be able to have a little more peace of mind and a little less rush in their lives. When you get that jolt of frightened doubt—Did I or didn't I turn off the iron?—while stuck in traffic, new systems like Savoy's will spare you a day of wondering if your house is burning down. A couple of touches on a screen and you'll know if you left something cooking on your electric stove (it doesn't yet work for gas appliances)—and if you did, another touch or two will turn it off. You can learn the details by calling Savoy at 508/366-1144.

As far as electronics in the kitchen go, Jerry Fiddler, chairman and founder of Wind River Systems, a company that writes the software that tells all the probes and chips buried in the world's machines what to do, says, "I'd like the stove to cook more intelligently and reliably. I have an oven that has a temperature probe, so I can put a leg of lamb in and say, 'Cook to one hundred and sixty,' and that works okay, but I think it can do a lot better. I think I should be able to say, 'Get the turkey done right, and by the way, I want to eat at three o'clock, so please do what you need to do with the oven to make that happen, and I like the skin extra crisp.'" That is not yet here, but it may arrive before long. In the kitchen, Before is gone, or at least it's leaving. After has not exactly arrived, but at least it's on the way. □

As electronics creep into the kitchen, it becomes possible to control appliances in new ways.



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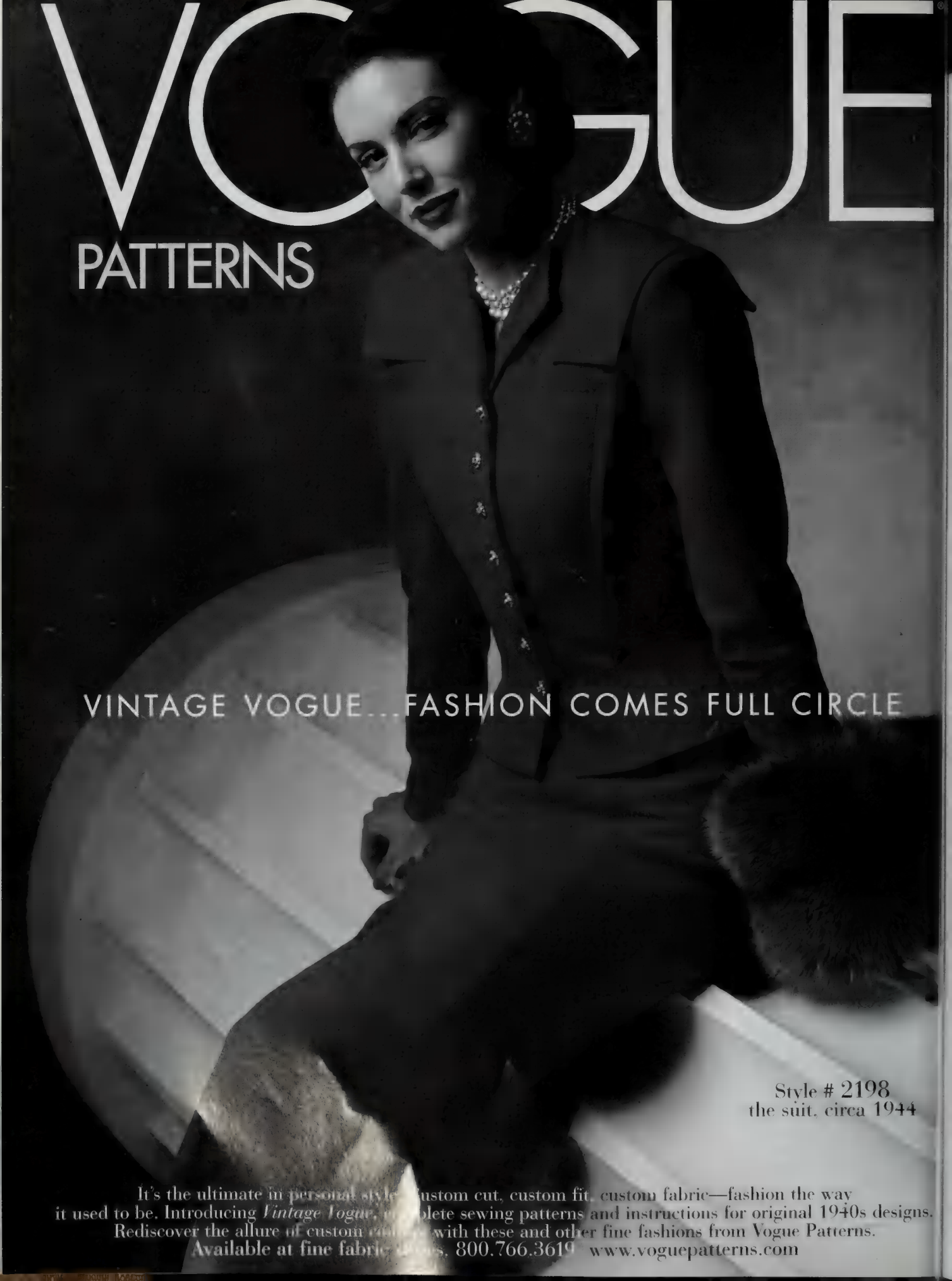
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Most men will have an isolated erection problem at some time in their lives, but for others it happens more frequently. If the inability to respond naturally to your partner has become a recurring problem, you may be suffering from a treatable medical condition called erectile dysfunction (ED), also known as impotence. The following questions and answers are designed to give you a brief introduction to the causes of ED and the various treatment options available. If you believe you are suffering from ED, or want to know more about the condition, talk to your doctor or other healthcare professional.

Erectile dysfunction: what every man should know

What is ED?

Erectile dysfunction is the consistent inability to achieve and/or maintain an erection sufficient for satisfactory sexual activity. That means not just an occasional problem, but one that has been occurring repeatedly for a period of time. It's a widespread condition, shared by approximately 30 million men in the United States.

What causes ED?

It was once believed that ED is all in your head, or just an inevitable result of getting older. Actually, the majority of ED cases are associated with physical conditions or events, including some that are age-related. The most common risk factors for ED include:

- *Diabetes, high blood pressure, hardening of the arteries, or high cholesterol*
- *Injury or illness, such as spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, depression, stroke, or surgery for the prostate or colon*
- *Medications that may bring about ED as an unwanted side effect*
- *Cigarette smoking or alcohol/drug abuse*
- *Psychological conditions, such as anxiety and stress*

If you want to know more about ED, talk to your doctor.

Can erectile dysfunction be treated?

Yes. The good news is that, regardless of the cause, the vast majority of ED cases are treatable. Patients have a variety of treatment options from which to choose, including oral medication, hand-held vacuum pumps, self-administered injections, pellet suppositories, and surgical implants.

Can anyone use these treatments?

It's important to remember that these treatments are not for everyone, but only for men diagnosed with ED. You and your doctor can determine the appropriate treatment for you. Because sexual activity can be demanding on the heart, you should talk to your doctor before using any treatment for ED.

How do I know if I have ED?

If you have erection problems, you probably already know it. But before your condition can be treated, you need to be diagnosed by your doctor. There is no need to be embarrassed or ashamed when discussing ED with your doctor. He or she has probably diagnosed and treated ED many times. Your doctor can provide you with understanding, support, and best of all, information.

To diagnose ED, doctors typically ask a few specific questions and give a routine physical exam. This should help your doctor arrive at a diagnosis. Before starting any treatment for ED, ask your doctor if your heart is healthy enough to handle the extra strain of having sex.

Based on this information, you and your doctor will decide on the treatment that is best for you.

REMEMBER:

ED is a common medical condition.

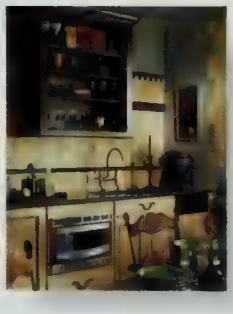
It's not an inevitable result of growing older.

ED is treatable with a variety of methods.

Only your doctor can prescribe the appropriate treatment.

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EXTRAORDINARY PROPERTIES ON THE MARKET

AVEDON IN MONTAUK, WARHOL IN MANHATTAN...



RICHARD AVEDON

MONTAUK

● **Richard Avedon**

Richard Avedon, casting about in the 1970s for a retreat from Manhattan, visited the easternmost tip of Long Island at the suggestion of fellow photographer Peter Beard. Montauk's rough-hewn simplicity had already attracted such '70s luminaries as Andy Warhol, Paul Morrissey, Halston and Ralph Lauren. Smitten, Avedon purchased eight acres and enlisted architect Harris Feinn, who had renovated his New York town house. Inspired by Long Island's saltbox farmhouses, Feinn built an airy Colonial-style house with mullioned windows, stone fireplaces, cedar shingles and uncluttered interiors. He added a separate studio, a caretakers' house and a skein of walkways to link the three buildings. The property includes an apple orchard, a pool and a stairway to the beach. $10 million.

For information, call the AD Estates Hot Line, 212/880-6803.



STEVE WHITTAKER



STEVE WHITTAKER

SAN FRANCISCO

● **Michael Taylor**

A Mediterranean-style mansion (above) in Pacific Heights was built in 1912. When Hamideh Kohlenberg and her late husband bought the mansion nearly 30 years ago, the only criterion they gave up-and-coming designer Michael Taylor was to "create an elegant house suitable for raising our four children."

Taylor worked on the property for several years, designing a villa of Italian and French sensibilities and opening it up to views of the Golden Gate Bridge and bringing in the colors of the nearby Palace of Fine Arts. "He would return from his travels with objects that he'd bought specifically for us," Kohlenberg says. The five-story mansion has a marble entrance hall, a double dining room with a marble fireplace, a French salon (above) and two terraced gardens. $6.85 million.

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continued on page 136

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EXTRAORDINARY PROPERTIES ON THE MARKET

continued from page 133

CHARTRES

● Claude Montana

Fashion designer Claude Montana first saw an early-18th-century château near Chartres eight years ago, and he purchased it on the spot (*AD*, Oct. 1994). He and designer Amr Mandour renovated the property extensively, stripping some of the 19th-century additions in order to restore such original features as *parquet de Versailles* floors, carved oak paneling and fireplaces.

The château is surrounded by a moat and flanked by two vine-covered pavilions. Mandour converted the greenhouse into a poolhouse. The 40-acre property also includes a tennis court, a pool and stables. 7.5 million French francs ($1.4 million).

For information, call the AD Estates Hot Line, 212/880-6803.



MARINA FAUST



MICHAEL MCCREARY

LOS ANGELES

● Gary Cooper

A Quincy Jones designed and built an open-plan house in the mid-1950s that was the last residence of actor Gary Cooper. The house in Holmby Hills, with a pitched roof and massive windows, typifies the architect's aesthetic of opening a structure up to its surroundings. And mindful of Cooper's famed reserve, Jones struck a balance between openness and seclusion.

The gated property includes a spa, a pool, gardens, an office and a guest bedroom that doubles as a screening room. The Coopers filled the house with paintings by Picasso, Bonnard, Renoir and Vuillard and lived there for seven years before the actor succumbed to cancer in 1961. $5.995 million.

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continued on page 138



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EXTRAORDINARY PROPERTIES ON THE MARKET

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JURIS MARDWIG



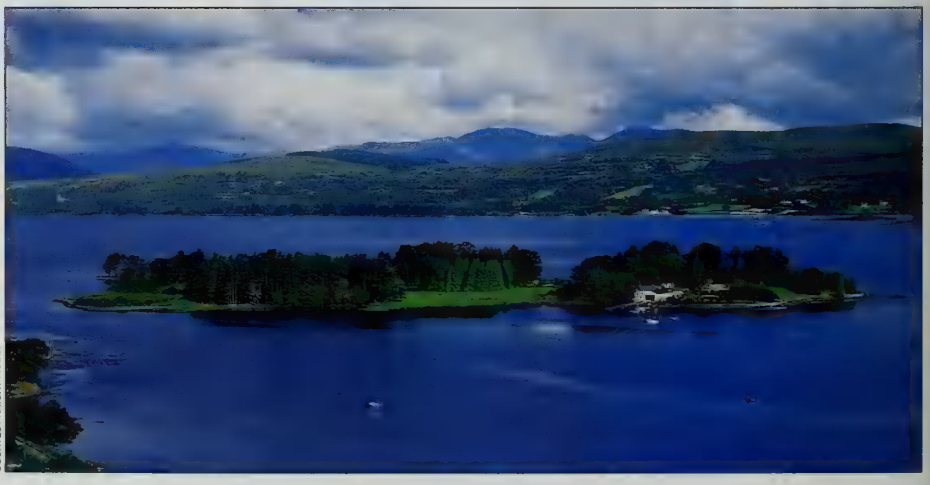
JURIS MARDWIG

NEW YORK

Andy Warhol

Andy Warhol moved in the mid-1970s from the Village into a turn-of-the-century neo-Georgian town house at 57 East 66th Street. The six-story structure (above), built in 1902 by architect Augustus Allen, served for 13 years as a refuge from the frenetic cultural scene that Warhol had created and as a veritable warehouse for his prodigious collections of art, artifacts and kitsch. The late designer Jed Johnson, who edited Warhol's films in the days of The Factory, worked on the house (entrance hall is above). A renovation retained the historical and architectural charm of the town house as its most celebrated occupant would have liked it. $7.5 million.

For information, call the AD Estates Hot Line, 212/880-6803.



COURTESY KNIGHT FRANK

IRELAND

On the west coast of Ireland, sheltered in the estuary of the Kenmare River, lies Dinish, a 28-acre island. Monks from Muckross Abbey would head to Dinish to fish and relax; their freshwater well still exists, as do the remains of a 12th- to 13th-century chapel. The Herbert family, which owned Muckross, built the timber-frame main house in the 19th century. There's a separate five-bedroom cottage and a boathouse and pier. Dinish was purchased 36 years ago by the Bostock family. "It's a unique, unspoiled area," says one of the Bostock daughters. Paths wind through formal gardens and woodland, and a perimeter walk follows the coastline. Dinish is a five-minute boat ride from the mainland, which supplies its water, electricity and phone service. 1.5 million Irish pounds ($2.3 million).

For information, call the AD Estates Hot Line, 212/880-6803.

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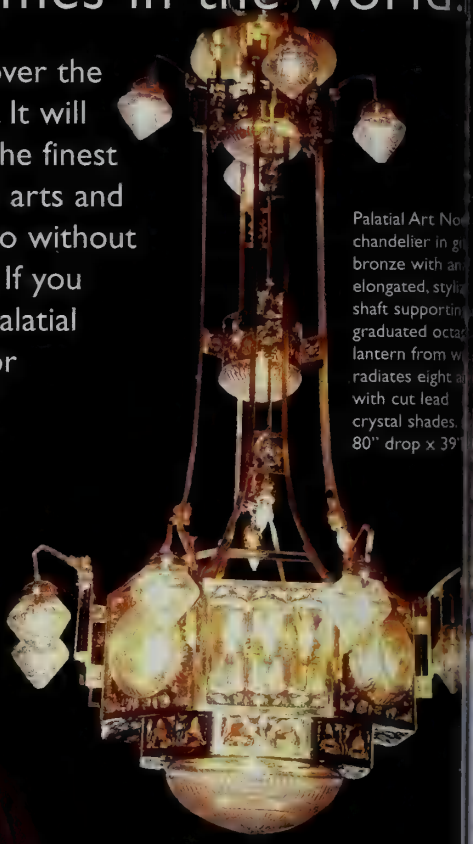

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There is an auction in Atlanta over the weekend of February 20 & 21. It will sell 10 million dollars worth of the finest architectural antiques, decorative arts and collectibles imaginable. It will do so without any minimum or reserve bids. If you are building or decorating a palatial home or are a designer or collector, you probably already know about it. If you do not, you need to find out.



Palatial Art No chandelier in g bronze with an elongated, styli shaft supportin graduated octa lantern from w radiates eight a with cut lead crystal shades.
80" drop x 39

Below: Magnificent *Belle Epoch* two door armoire in black walnut with bombé sides, elaborate scrolled rocaille decoration and prodigiously beveled glass doors.
102"h x 64"w



Right: Grand scale entrance doors in mahogany. They originally served a prominent pallazo outside Rome and are extremely substantial and adorned tastefully with lion masks and paw scrolls. They will be sold along with a many palatial doors at the auction.
14'h x 8' w overall



One of a rare pair of Italian Regency arch top vitr oak with c-scroll acanthus feet, curved sides with light rocaille and feminine mask corbels flanking the central door.
102"h x 64"w



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y carved signed Tiffany & Co.
er clock in oak case. The lower
icts a relief carved scene of
enjoying smoke and drink. The
binet is pierce carved with a satyr's
metrical scrolls and fruit garlands.
ub mask corbels flank the door and
he head which is surmounted with
sicians from which rises an
and egg & dart arch. The face
d primarily of doré acanthus filagree.
"w

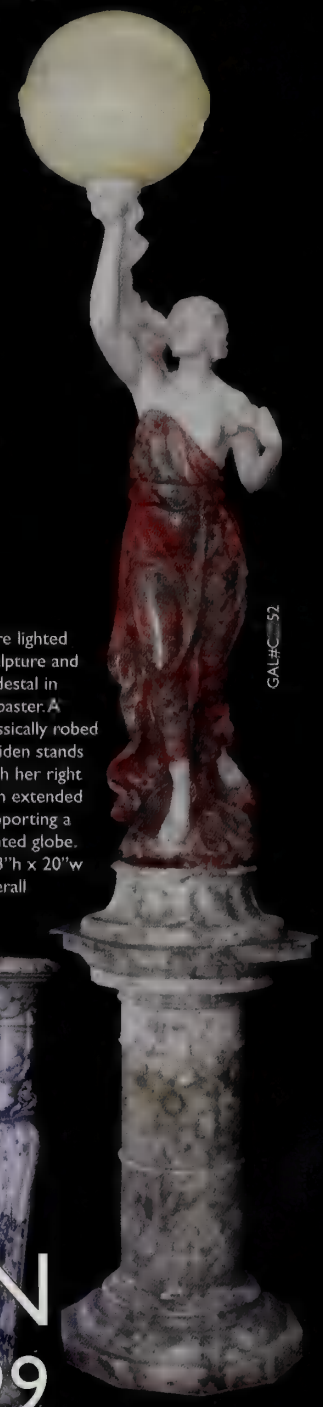




Left: 18th century Aubusson tapestry depicting an allegorical scene with floral border. Zephyr, the west wind, blows good fortune on three travelers in the foreground; treasure at their feet and guarded by regal lions. Two ships sail on the horizon and the subjects appear to be looking toward a verdant land across the water.
12' x 12'

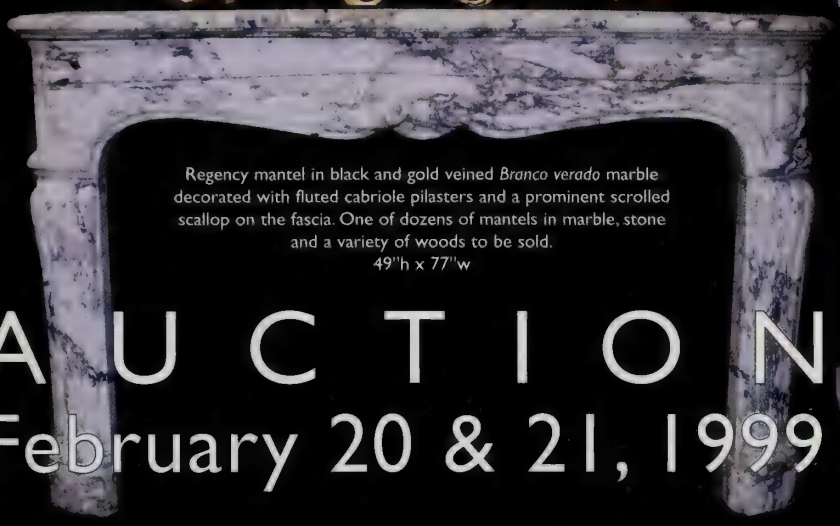
Three piece Rococo doré bronze clock set. The clock is comprised of intertwined rocaille scrolls draped with floral garlands and figural putti engaged in various scholarly pursuits. The candelabra feature matching putti supporting foliate torches further adorned with songbirds.
clock 25"h x 20"w
candelabra 33"h x 13"w





Rare lighted sculpture and pedestal in alabaster. A classically robed maiden stands with her right arm extended supporting a lighted globe.
103"h x 20"w
overall

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EXTRAORDINARY PROPERTIES ON THE MARKET

continued from page 138

PALM SPRINGS

When William Burgess sought the ideal weekend getaway in the desert for his family, he found a site in the San Jacinto Mountains and jackhammered a home out of the granite hillside. Located above the original Desert Inn in Palm Springs, the Burgess house was conceived and constructed in 1959 as an oasis, with bougainvillea, waterfalls and a koi pond. The house, later expanded, consisted of a small bedroom, a bath, a kitchen and a living room, with a pool in the front. The exteriors are all glass or mirror, to reflect the views of mountains and desert. The furniture is by such modern designers as Noguchi, Eames, Saarinen and Platner. $1.99 million furnished.

For information, call the AD Estates Hot Line, 212/880-6803.



WILLIAM BURGESS

MUSTIQUE

Colin Tennant, now Lord Glenconner, bought the West Indies island of Mustique in 1959, and he saw its potential as the site of private retreats. He formed the Mustique Company in 1968 to develop the island and offered a parcel to Princess Margaret as a wedding present (*AD*, Oct. 1979). David Bowie (*AD*, Sept. 1992) and Mick Jagger also built vacation houses. Unspoiled by commercial development, Mustique now has more than 100 residences.

The Terraces, a sprawling 17-acre hilltop estate with a Palladian-style villa, was built in the mid-1980s by architect Tom Wilson and designer Arthur B. Smith. Wilson and Smith had collaborated previously on a pavilion, also Palladian style, on the Côte d'Azur (*AD*, Apr. 1979). The property totals 34,000 square feet, with eight outbuildings, a fountain courtyard, a dining pavilion, a small chapel, a tennis court, a pool and an irrigation system. The 13-room villa was crafted with arched French doors, Italian marble and hand-painted ceilings and walls. $22.3 million furnished.

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TONY DA SILVA

continued on page 146


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EXTRAORDINARY PROPERTIES ON THE MARKET

continued from page 142



TIM BEDDOW



TIM BEDDOW

KENYA

In the mid-1960s Alan Donovan accepted a position in Nigeria with the State Department, thus fulfilling a passion he'd had for Africa since childhood. Some 30 years later he runs African Heritage, a company that promotes African crafts, and lives in a nine-room house overlooking Nairobi National Park in Kenya.

The eight-acre property *(AD,* Nov. 1996), with views of Mount Kilimanjaro, is a living monument to African culture. Recalling the mud mosques that he had encountered in Mali, the turreted and columned house (above), designed by architect David Bristow, also reflects the vernacular architecture of coastal Kenya and the styles of northern Nigeria and southern Morocco. The outer walls were constructed from hand-carved stone covered with cement that was dyed in earth tones and decorated with West African moldings. The interior (above) is rich with textiles, pottery and paintings from over 20 African nations. "One reason for my home is to show people how to live with African crafts," Donovan says. $1.5 million.

For information, call the AD Estates Hot Line, 212/880-6803. □



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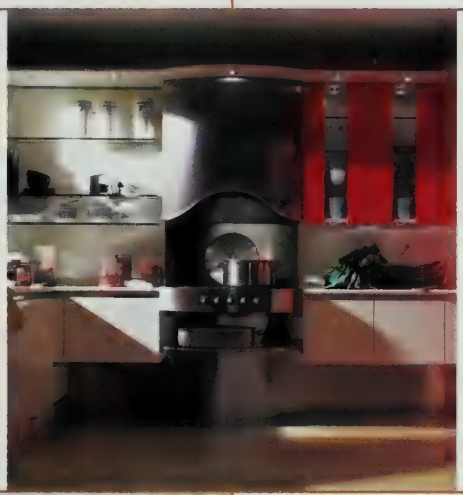




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THE RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF PERFECTION. LEXUS

Architecture by John B. Murray, AIA
Interior Design by Mario Buatta
Text by Aileen Mehle
After Photography by Scott Frances

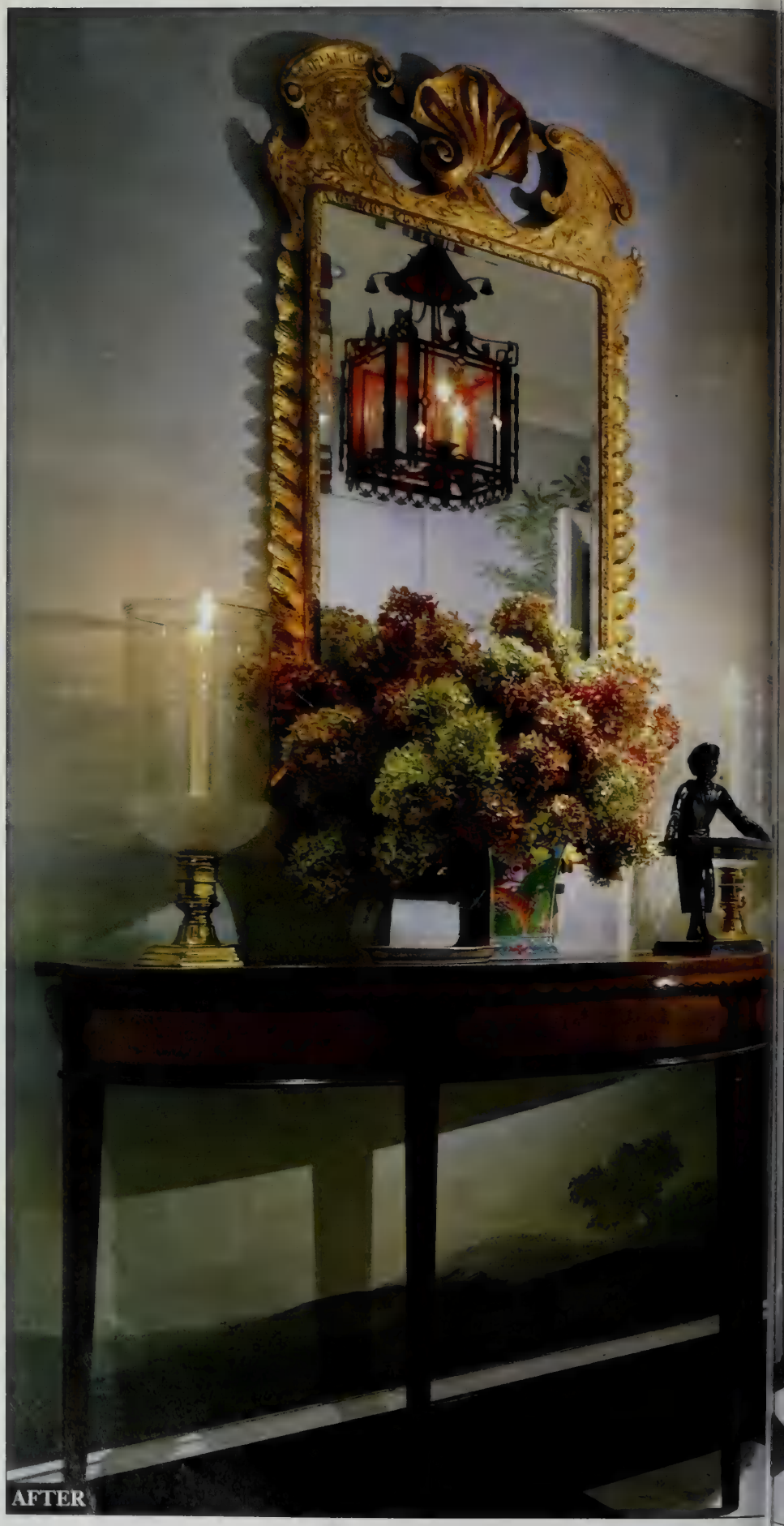
A NEW YORK STORY

DRESSING UP PLAIN ROOMS ON FIFTH AVENUE

It was really nothing before, a cheerless, charmless shell of an apartment, flat and boring, with walls where they shouldn't be and not much else where it should be. The floors needed attention, the doors needed to be moved, and the dull color of the rooms was to cringe for. And where was the powder room? The whole place, save for its splendid Fifth Avenue location and superb views of Manhattan, was one big cry for help.



BEFORE PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY MARIO BUATTA



"It hadn't been decorated in years," Mario Buatta says of the Manhattan apartment he redesigned with architect John B. Murray. ABOVE: "The entrance hall was a dark, dreary space." RIGHT: "The murals evoke the feeling of walking through a conservatory." Hyde Park Antiques cachepot. Demilune table from Florian Papp. Clarence House silk.





To the rescue rode Mario Buatta, the interior designer known far and wide as the Prince of Chintz, because if anyone knows his way around chintz, it's Buatta. He knows his way around a lot of things, all calculated to make a house, an apartment, even a lean-to, more beautiful, but chintz is his baby.

He eagle-eyed the uninviting blank spaces before him and, starting from scratch, attacked the ugly duckling and left behind a swan—to say nothing of a delighted client. Buatta has done it—again.

Perhaps *delighted* is too weak a word to describe the client's joy at seeing how he had transformed her latest acquisition, an eight-room New York pied-à-terre. Here is what she has to say about Buatta, and if he doesn't have these words framed in gold—or tattooed on





"The rooms were boring," notes Buatta (top). ABOVE: The living room. RIGHT: "The striped draperies make the ceiling seem higher." Stool, Kentshire Galleries. H. M. Luther table by window, right. Christopher Norman drapery band and blue sofa fabric. Drapery welt, Scalamandré. Jim Thompson diamond-pattern pillow fabric. Stark carpet.





"We bought lots of antiques especially for the apartment." LEFT: A japanned Queen Anne secretary and an early-18th-century stool anchor one end of the living room. Cowtan & Tout silk on Georgian armchairs, from Hyde Park Antiques. Chinese porcelain garden seat, right, from Kentshire Galleries. Florian Papp table. Brunschwig & Fils chintz.



his chest—he doesn't know a compliment from chinoiserie: "I've worked with many designers and architects over the years, but none has been as talented and as easy to work with as Mario. No one else can combine patterns and colors so well.

"I know when he does a room it will make me happy and that I won't be shunted to a person working for him," she continues. "He does it all himself, including climbing up on chairs, hanging pictures and moving furniture around until it looks just right. He knows antiques and porcelains and has the ability to find the perfect little object for a tabletop. He has an architect's eye, invaluable for improving the bones of a setting. I feel fortunate to have found him. I've been living in his beautiful interiors ever since."

When she found him was in 1987, and where she found him was at a Kips Bay Decorator Show House, an annual New York charitable event that showcases not only many of the landmark residences but the skills of the city's top interior designers as well. Buatta had done a living room in the house, English in feeling, and the client saw it and loved it. She had also seen his work in magazines and knew he was her man. She found out where he lived and knocked on his door, just like that.

His first job for her was that same year in Hillsborough, the exclusive area near San Francisco where she and her husband had a French manor house. Buatta redecorated the entire *maison à la française*, and she couldn't have been more *heureuse*. She had also been look-

ABOVE: "The lemon-yellow walls and crisp off-white woodwork keep the living room light both day and night. I grouped comfortable chairs by the sofa to form the main seating area." Steinway piano. Crystal lamps from Colefax & Fowler. Porcelain cabbage, foreground, from Old Versailles. H. M. Luther mother-of-pearl box. Clarence House pouf fabric.

THE SICKLY BLUE PLASTER WAS STRIPPED FROM THE LIBRARY, WHICH THE CLIENT WANTED PANELED.

ing for a New York apartment, and she and the designer searched the city until three years ago, when they fell upon this jewel-in-disguise. Says Buatta, "It was all plain beige except for a creepy bluish paint in what is now the library. It was hideous. I called in architect John Murray, who at the time was a partner in the firm of Ferguson Murray and Shamamian. Together we decided what to do—bring out the bones, raise the height of the doors, open up the windows to emphasize the magical view, create a badly needed flow, remove certain walls and shift others forward."

It took a year and a half to rebuild and redesign the apartment, but when it was finished, there was a nineteenth-century English mantel in the living room and all the rooms were painted the

continued on page 238


BEFORE


AFTER

ABOVE: The library. RIGHT: The new paneled library. Drum table, Georgian armchair and dining chairs, Kentshire Galleries. John Boone wall lights. Quadrille sofa velvet. Old World Weavers drapery fabric with Brunschwig & Fils trims. Clarence House chair and ottoman print and paisley. Wallcovering on ceiling, Donghia. Stark geometric carpet.





"The master bedroom's canopy bed almost becomes a separate room within a room," says Buatta. Early-19th-century mirror, left, from Florian Papp. Hyde Park 18th-century English étagère. Cowtan & Tout valance fringe. Quadrille table skirt fabric, foreground. Drapery, table skirt and bed hanging trims from Scalamandré. Stark carpet.



Interior Design by Victoria Hagan/Text by Michael Frank
Before Photography by Billy Cunningham
After Photography by Scott Frances

WINNING SOLUTIONS FOR WESTCHESTER

A CONTEMPORARY TOUCH ENLIVENS A TIMEWORN RESIDENCE IN NEW YORK





Even the most solid of old houses can evolve imperfectly over time. Changes in taste seem to occur about every ten years, so design choices that appeared stylish and forward-thinking one decade look clumsy or fussy the next. When Victoria Hagan was invited to review a house in Westchester County, New York, before her clients purchased it, she quickly determined that it had been built in the early twentieth century, much renovated during the 1920s, then remodeled and revised again during the mid-1980s. "With these different layers," Hagan recalls, "the place was charming and beautiful. But I sensed that it had greater potential. I knew that it could be something truly elegant and mature."



After Hagan's clients, a banker and his wife, acquired the property, they invited her to give her opinion. "'I can fix up the kitchen for you, and maybe take a look at the master bath,'" Hagan remembers telling the couple. (Both areas had been remade during the 1980s and looked especially dated.) No, they told her; they wanted to know what she *really* thought. What Hagan really thought was that this house represented a familiar sequence in her experience of architecture and design: At first a place seems to be in move-in condition, but upon closer inspection it becomes apparent that a more comprehensive treatment is called for.

The clients were game. As residents of the neighbor-

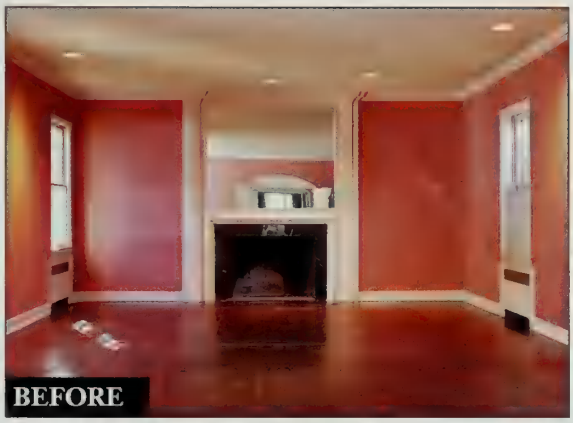
ABOVE LEFT: In New York's Westchester County, designer Victoria Hagan (left) renovated a turn-of-the-century clapboard house whose previous remodelings had begun to show their age. "I wanted to take the interiors back to an earlier and purer sensibility," she says.

ABOVE: The entrance hall "had to be simplified," Hagan says. RIGHT: She stripped floors and walls, then added 18th-century Italian armchairs, from Marshall Edward Antiques, Regency carved hall chairs, from Hyde Park Antiques, and an Elizabeth Eakins stair runner.


AFTER



LEFT: Pale, luminous colors in the living room helped Hagan achieve her goal of "admitting as much light as possible." The George III parcel-gilt settee, covered in Decorators Walk linen damask, is from Sotheby's. The sea-grass rug is from Beauvais Carpets.





TOP: The living room's recessed lighting "seemed inappropriate for a house of this period." ABOVE: Hagan put in lamps and Marvin Alexander sconces. Bernd Goeckler chairs; John Boone low table. Lee Calicchio Antiques mirror and quill box; Doris Leslie Blau rug. Decorators Walk sofa fabric; Lee Jofa drapery fabric.

hood, they had had their eye on the graceful old clapboard house for several years. They were particularly fond of its setting, in an established and wooded garden, and its approach, through an allée of London plane trees. The parents of grown children, they were willing to start all over again: They came to the planning table with little more than a family clock, a favorite painting and open minds. "They wanted a retreat for their whole family, I saw that," says Hagan. "At the same time they wanted to retrieve the house's fundamental strengths, which were stateliness and simplicity. They wanted the house to be more oriented to the garden. And they wanted the basic structure to be updated and put in sharp working shape."

She began by addressing what she calls the "fuzziness" the architecture had developed over the years. With architect Michael Canter, who works as an exclusive consultant on Hagan's architectural projects, she removed an overhang and installed a portico, streamlining the entrance. She painted the beige exterior a crisp white. Then she stripped away the shrubs that clung to and cluttered the house's perimeter, faced the foundation with stone and installed a new slate roof. Later changes in the garden included the elimination of the kidney-shaped swimming pool and the addition of pergolas designed by Canter and landscape architect Nancy Haseley, who also supervised the regrading of the property.

Hagan's approach to the interiors was to "purify and unify, add light and introduce color" while infusing the spaces with the layered





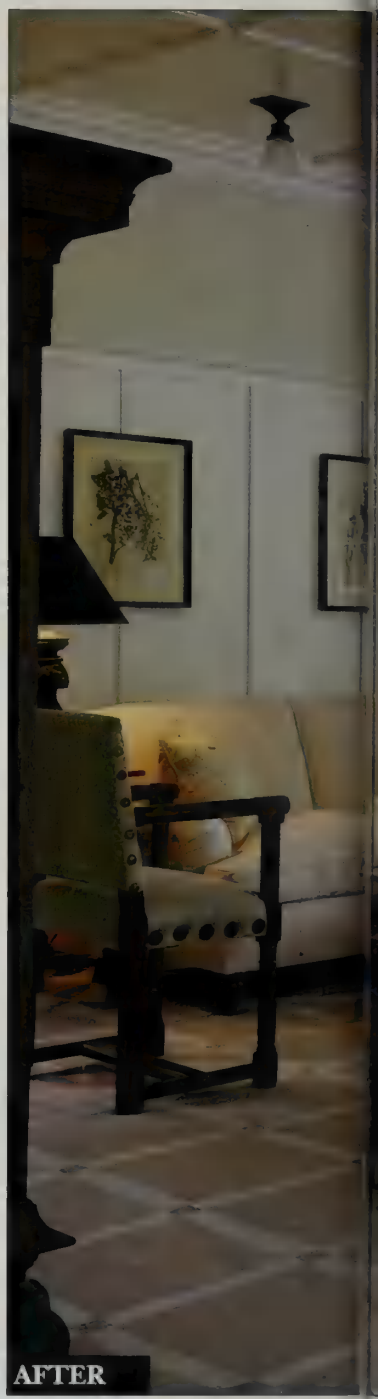
"In the dining room, we preserved and enhanced the existing cupboards and moldings," says Hagan. The circa 1810 clock is Swedish. The chairs are late-18th-century Venetian. Cowtan & Tout shade fabric; Randolph & Hein chair fabric. Marshall Edwards Antiques chandelier.

THE CLIENTS "WANTED TO RETRIEVE THE HOUSE'S FUNDAMENTAL STRENGTHS, WHICH WERE STATELINESS AND SIMPLICITY," SAYS HAGAN.









TOP: The kitchen, says Hagan, was "a place you didn't want to be, dark and confined in feeling. The light was a real problem." ABOVE: Fixtures replaced the harsh fluorescent light, and bright tones were chosen for cabinets and floor tiles. Backsplash from Country Floors.

but restrained quality that is her trademark. In the entrance hall, for instance, she peeled off the wallpaper and painted the walls a subtle gray blue. She removed all the window treatments and sanded down the floor, which had been painted with a faux checkerboard Hagan found "dishonest." She applied a stencil of flowers and tendrils—"just a hint of the garden creeping indoors"—and selected pieces of period furniture with strong graphic silhouettes, among them Italian painted and Regency hall chairs and an Empire console.

Hagan believes that in an earlier renovation the living room was expanded from its original size, which helps to explain its long, narrow L shape and proportionally low ceilings. Her changes there were gentle but effective. As in the rest of the house, she eliminated recessed lighting. She removed a mirror over the fireplace and substituted a plain painted panel, because "mirrors don't always expand a room, the way people think. Sometimes they can make a space feel cluttered." She changed the radiator covers, restored the floor and redesigned the bay window, replacing its plain glass with paned glass. She painted the walls cream and for the remainder of her palette—gray blue, green and brown, earth tones all—



turned to the Flemish tapestry panel hanging on one wall and the Turkish Ushak carpet that covers part of the floor. The furniture is a representative Hagan mix of periods and origins and includes an eighteenth-century English settee, a pair of Emilio Terry armchairs and a contemporary low table with a steel base and a bronze top.

"I think that the interiors, as a whole, have a slight Swedish influence," Hagan says. Nowhere is this more evident than in the dining room, where she painted the ceiling, wainscoting, moldings and corner cupboards in various tones of that indefinable gray blue that the Swedes have historically used to stave off the melancholia of long and icy white winters. Offset here by walls painted with faux panels and a collection of creamware, the blue tones revive a room that formerly seemed cramped and closed. In the nearby library, Hagan darkened the blue by several shades; she also replaced the window and selected furniture whose bold lines hold their own against the vivid walls and glowing leather-bound books.

All these adjustments seem relatively understated when compared with the work Hagan did in the kitchen and master bath, which were completely gutted. Both interiors were suffering from the 1980s

Opposite Above: A dull, perfunctory family room "was fundamentally rethought," says Hagan. Above: She and her design team "reworked all the architectural details of the room to give them the integrity of the original house." Handwoven wool rug by Elizabeth Eakins.

doldrums: bad flow and overbearing mirrors in the bath, and dingy cabinets and bland tile in the kitchen. "Although we were starting over in these spaces, we wanted both of them to feel integrated with the rest of the house," she says. She chose a glass-and-marble vanity and a built-in tub for the bath, and she appointed the kitchen with a limestone floor, painted cabinets and mellow tiles. The kitchen was completed with elegant new moldings and glass fronts for some of the upper cabinets. An antique Swedish light fixture hangs above the breakfast area.

Similarly comprehensive was Hagan's reworking of the family room, which she says was the one interior in the house that "didn't feel good to me when I first saw it." It was as though, she says, in 1985 someone had simply


BEFORE


AFTER

decided to tack a drywall box onto the house. The step-down space had low ceilings, squat doors and hardly any moldings. "I wanted the room to feel like it was the informal part of a fine old 1920s home," she says. Hagan envisioned it as an enclosed former porch. To this end she added three-quarter wainscoting, which "surprisingly makes the ceiling feel higher," beaded board and a grid pattern on the ceiling itself and a bay window echoing the redesigned bay window in the living room. She painted the walls celery green and the moldings and wainscoting white; selected a pale geometric handwoven rug; and furnished the room with—as is her habit—an array of emphatic antique and contemporary pieces. An Anglo-Indian-style armchair and ottoman come together with a low table designed by her office, while a nineteenth-century studded throne stool keeps company with an English Arts and Crafts side table.

Looking back, Hagan says that the house "was a kind of Pygmalion experience for me. The basic elements were already there—already carved, so to speak. My job was to find a way to free them, to bring this lovely old house more fully to life." □

OPPOSITE: In the master bedroom, only the mantelpiece was changed. BELOW: While structurally unaltered, the room is transformed by light and color. Clarence House drapery fabric; Manuel Canovas duvet cover. Bernd Goeckler 18th-century rectangular mirror; Stark carpet.





HELL'S KITCHEN SALVATION

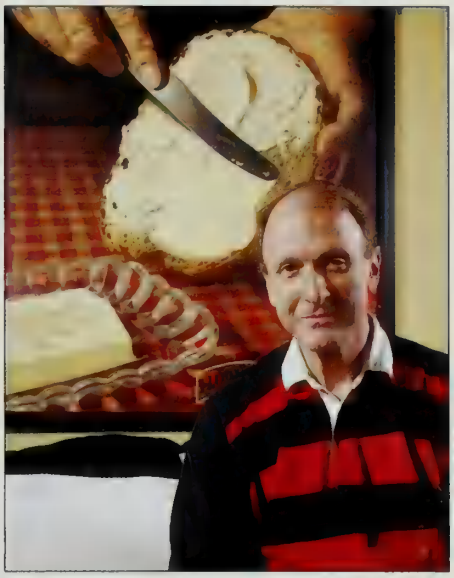
JOHN LORING REWORKS A NEW YORK TOWN HOUSE FOR A FEW OF HIS FAVORITE THINGS

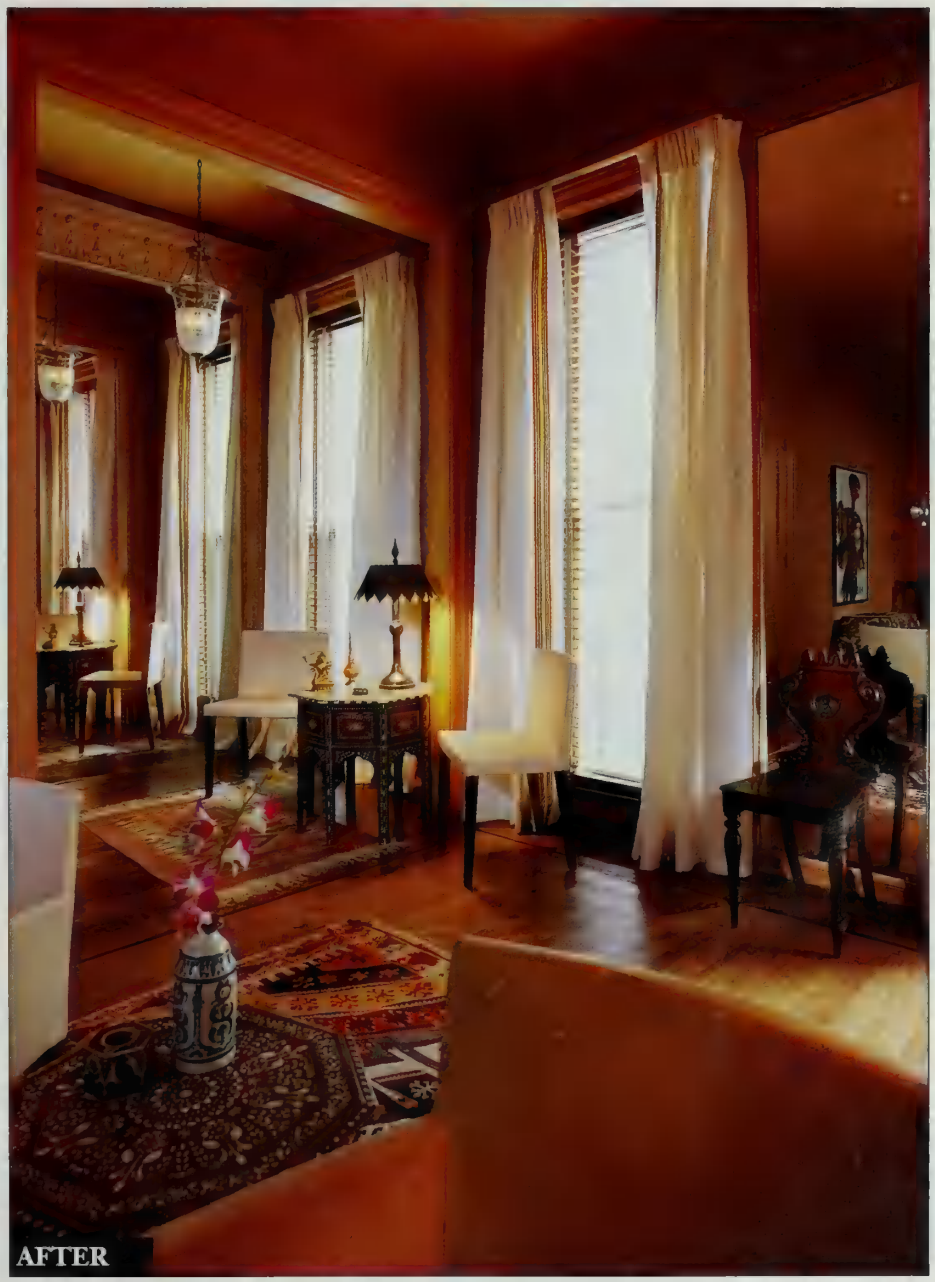
Interior Design by Benjamin Sinclair Quinn/Text by Judith Thurman/Photography by Billy Cunningham

"My job description is world's biggest shopper," quips Tiffany's design director John Loring (opposite top), whose town house was an apartment building. ABOVE: The living room is centered around an 1853 marble fireplace, Swiss posters and contemporary Italian chairs.









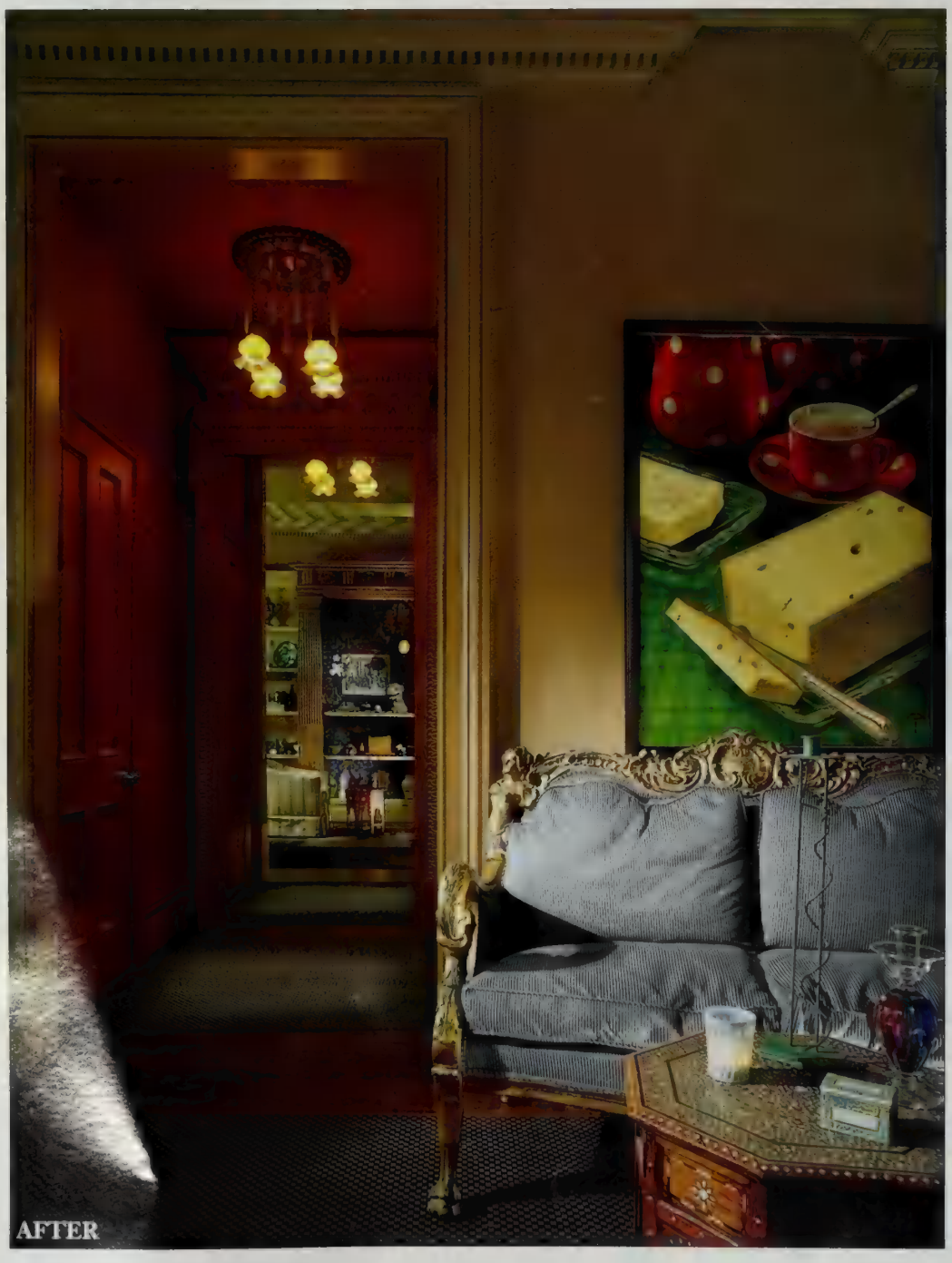
ABOVE RIGHT: Loring and designer Benjamin Sinclair Quinn gutted the property and created an alcove from a hallway. RIGHT: "We added a mirror in the alcove next to where the front door once was to bring in light," says Loring. The new cherry floor has black-walnut details.



LEFT: A white-tile kitchen and bath were turned into a parlor and alcove. BELOW: The alcove's circa 1890 Tiffany light fixture has shades from Loring's great-grandparents' house in Chicago. In the parlor are an Irish gilt sofa, a 1938 Swiss poster and an inlaid Syrian table. Rugs from ABC Carpet.

RIGHT: A bedroom and one of the four kitchens became the center hall and dining room. OPPOSITE: Quinn installed floors of yellow limestone and put in shelves that hold a collection of Charles Catteau's 1920s Belgian ceramic vases. Solar standing candlesticks.





At first it may seem incongruous that John Loring, who has for the past twenty years been design director of Tiffany's, should choose to live in a former Hell's Kitchen apartment building a stone's throw from Times Square. Less, perhaps, when one learns that his great-grandfather was the proprietor of America's largest three-ring circus and the inventor of billboard advertising. But Loring relishes incongruities, particularly in the domains of design.

"The notion of provenance or quality for its own sake is entirely irrelevant to contemporary life," he says. "There's no reason why the priceless artifact, the humble memento and pieces from wildly disparate eras can't coexist. Within ten feet of each other in one living area are a Regency daybed, two Art Déco chairs and a desk from Sam Flax, while a Frankoma lion that I bought at a state fair in Texas sits on a table from André Groult's own study. These objects have in common their strength and boldness. They're visually authentic, and for me that's the essential."

Loring's move to west midtown wasn't only incongruous, it was sudden—but then, he is the scion of vagabonds. His mother had a house in Venice that he adored; his



brother lives in Switzerland; he himself has homes in London and Paris, and "none of us," he notes, "has ever been hesitant to uproot himself when the fancy strikes." It struck the designer unexpectedly nearly three years ago, when—having just settled into a new apartment on Fifth Avenue—he read that Mayor Giuliani planned a major redevelopment of Hell's Kitchen. The same morning, he taxied west and began looking for a homestead on this new frontier before the land rush began.

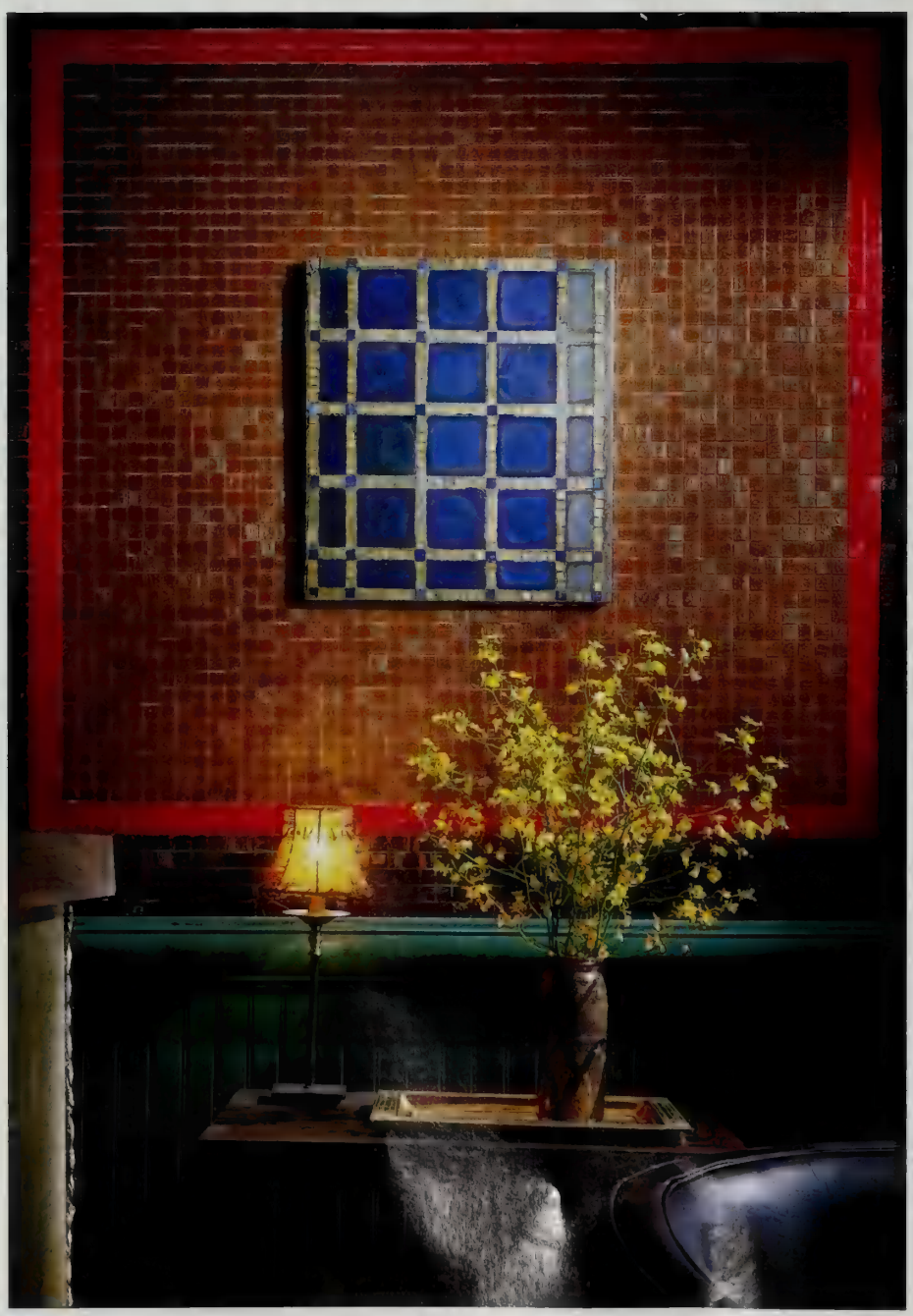
His new residence is a narrow, four-story town house built in 1853, whose long windows once looked out toward the farms that then lay west of Ninth Avenue. Needless to say, the landscape has changed. Today it is a neighborhood of experimental theaters, ethnic restaurants and a vibrant street life. From his roof, Loring has a view of the great steel-and-glass towers to the east, but also of Victorian chimneys and tenement fire escapes. The extremes of scale —and of wealth—appeal to his love of the incongruous.

It took a certain pioneer vision to see the possibilities in the former apartment building, which was a warren of little apartments with a claustrophobic stairwell and a rubbish-filled patio. He knew he was facing a daunting renovation that would require great lucidity and determination. But those were the qualities that had attracted him to the work of young British designer Benjamin Sinclair Quinn, who collaborated with him on his former Upper East Side apartment (see *Architectural Digest*, February 1996). Their strengths, says Loring, are complementary. "I've seen too much," he explains, "and Ben has an unjaded eye. I'm easily distracted; he's very focused. I've generally lived in white rooms; he has an audacious sense of color. But we both

RIGHT: "I find the absence of architectural detail in American homes disturbing," says Loring, who added door surrounds. FAR RIGHT: *Meadows Farm* by John F. Herring, Sr., is in the study. Carlyle sofa; Quadrille fabric. Baker Furniture table. Tiffany's candleholders, picture frame and fire surround.

BELOW: A circa 1890 Egyptian Revival panel, set against a background of Venetian mosaic glass, was used as architectural ornamentation in the study. Loring's collection of Favrile glass panels includes two that Louis Comfort Tiffany had used as display samples.







admire architectural detail."

After leaving art school "for the real world," Quinn, who is not yet thirty, began his career renovating farmhouses in his native Lancashire. Loring was his first high-profile client, although he is currently collaborating with fashion designer Stella



McCartney on her London house. "I'm interested in the fabric of a building," Quinn says, "and in creating rooms whose integrity does not depend on their furnishings. I like grandeur, but not when it's pretentious, and only where it's appropriate. Jack and I work well together because he's visually emotional and I'm down-to-earth. At times I think he's somewhat burdened by his erudition—his deep sense of reference and history. For me, something works or it doesn't."

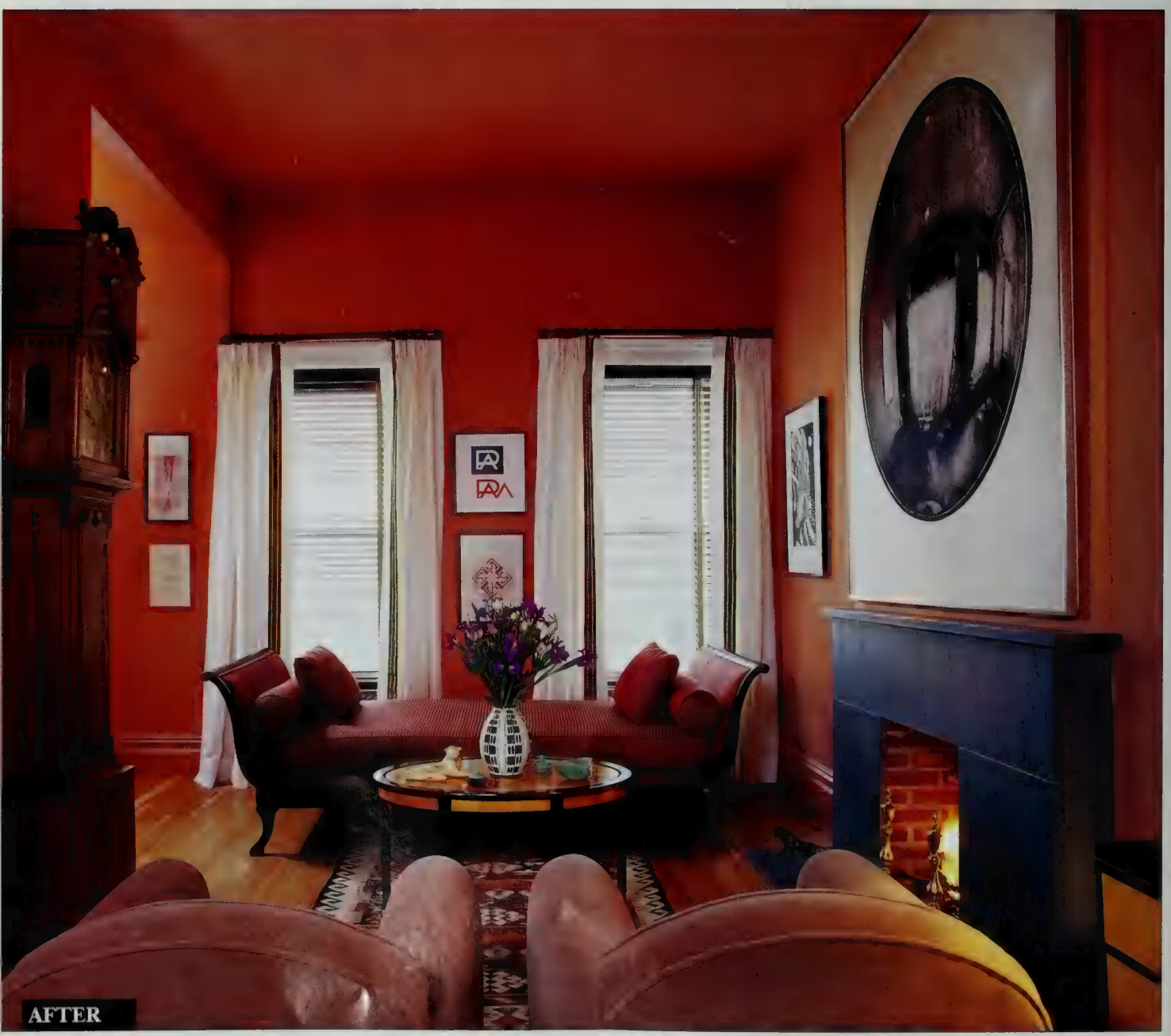
After Loring's trusted contractor, Ken Mason, had stripped the house to its skeleton and replaced its core systems, Quinn supervised the installation of an open modern staircase of painted steel and natural cherry. He then began to layer the rooms with the architectural enrichments that are his signature: period moldings; a coffered ceiling; Adamesque doorframes; a George II curio cabinet built into the back of a former vestibule. He and Loring chose the colors from a palette of paints developed for the historic houses of the British National Trust. On a landing and in alcoves they built false doorways lined floor-to-ceiling



LEFT: A kitchen "with excellent views of the Empire State Building" became the living area of the top-floor loft. BELOW: "I like using oversize things to make small rooms look bigger." Loring's 1969 painting *Joseph Losey's Living Room* hangs over a slate fireplace. Regency daybed with Quadrille fabric.

RIGHT: "The four-story house was a warren of tiny rooms," says Loring, "but its modest scale appealed to me." OPPOSITE: A guest bedroom that looks toward the master bedroom has French and Italian movie posters. Tiffany's vase. Hermès bed throw. Rug, ABC Carpet.







with mirror so that each room seems to flow into its double. "Because the house is narrow and rather dark," says Quinn, "I wanted to build in as much detail and as much book and display space for Jack's treasures as possible."

Loring, who calls himself "an acquisitor rather than a collector," has an especially rich array of ceramics bought in "hit-and-run shopping raids of no more than an hour in whatever city I happen to be visiting." His aim, however, is true, because the raids have netted a set of eighteenth-century inkwells (an hour in Bermuda) and ceramics by 1950s Danish modernists (an hour in Copenhagen) and the Art Déco potter Charles Catteau (an hour in Paris).

When all one's possessions have a biography, as Loring's do, the residence that contains them becomes a memory palace, and every story of the house is a complex and intensely personal visual narrative. He says that his guests invariably choose a favorite floor. His own is the darkly luminous and haute bohemian suite of rooms off the entrance hall, "purposefully underlit for serenity," which open, at the rear, to a garden landscaped by Quinn.

In the dining room, the walls have murals composed of a set of bucolic blue-and-white tile panels from a Lisbon palace that were made in 1695. Loring borrowed their motif of tulips and roses for the Tiffany's china service he owns. Antique Nepalese beakers of silvered brass once belonged to his friend Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, who, as an editor at Doubleday, published six of Loring's books on taste and décor.

The owner takes particular pride in his study, which was designed to showcase

continued on page 244

"THERE'S NO REASON WHY THE PRICELESS ARTIFACT, THE HUMBLE MEMENTO AND PIECES FROM WILDLY DISPARATE ERAS CAN'T COEXIST."

Interior Design by John Cottrell
Text by Hunter Drohojowska-Philp
Before Photography by Peter Valli
After Photography by Mary E. Nichols

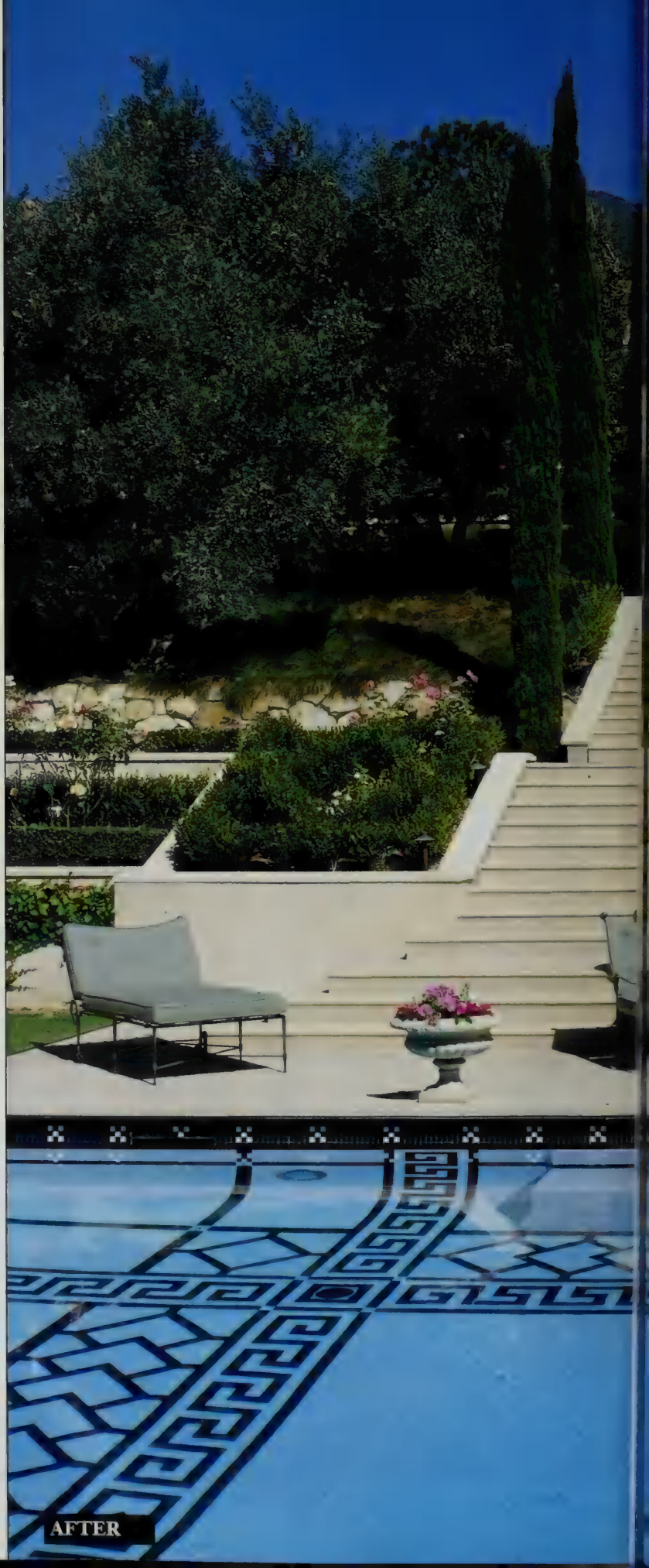
ITALIAN ECHOES ON THE COAST

A CALIFORNIA VILLA CONJURES THE GRANDEUR OF PALLADIAN DREAMS


BEFORE

While traveling through Italy, Jim and Beverly Zaleski found themselves captivated by the worn beauty of Renaissance buildings, with their arches and colonnades and felicitous blend of plastered walls and gilt ceilings. "We love Italian style," says Jim Zaleski. "The Italians have an architecture that's masculine—Mediterranean, but not as froufrou as the French."

After one such trip in 1993, the Zaleskis returned home to the southern California city of Santa Barbara, where they gave designer Jon Sorrell the final go-ahead to begin building their new house. They had met Sorrell two years earlier, after he had built a much-admired Italian-style villa, Il Paradiso, in


AFTER

"It's amazing to find such a feeling of Europe in California," designer John Cottrell says of a residence in Montecito. ABOVE: The Palladian-style house's exterior was designed by Jon Sorrell. RIGHT: The terraced garden has 96 steps and was designed by landscape architect Sandy Devine.





ABOVE: John Cottrell, center, with residents Jim and Beverly Zaleski. "If John couldn't find the items that we wanted, he found a way to have them made," says Jim Zaleski.



ABOVE: Groin-vaulted ceilings in the entrance hall "established the room's classic design," Cottrell says. RIGHT: Fifteen molds were required to make up the cast-bronze pieces of the chandeliers. The wrought iron railing is in the 18th-century French style.

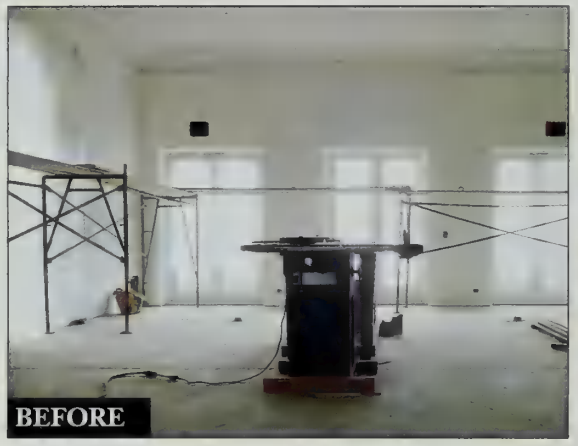
the hills of nearby Montecito. Sorrell had also purchased the house next door to Il Paradiso, planning to construct another residence—this one to be modeled on Palladio's Villa Barbaro, outside Venice. The Zaleskis purchased the land and the architectural plans from Sorrell and asked him to build the house.

"The original house was a modern, 1970s, single-story residence designed by architect Jack Warner," Sorrell says. "The plan was to embellish and add, but we went through so many alterations

AFTER



"IT REMINDS ME OF A HOUSE THE VANDERBILTS WOULD HAVE DONE," SAYS JOHN COTTRELL.



ABOVE: "There was no way to know how the living room—or any room—would look in the early stages," says Cottrell. RIGHT: He used "typical Venetian colors—turquoises, golds and pinks." Scalamandré drapery and sofa fabric. Brunschwig & Fils gold chair brocade. Stark carpet.

that the whole house ended up being bulldozed. Only the slab was left."

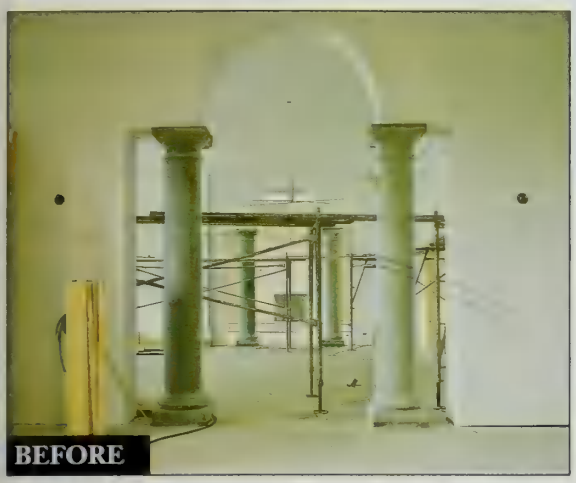
The process took six years, but the Zaleskis now live in Villa Zefiro, which is named for the gentle zephyrs wafting up from the Pacific Ocean. After passing through iron gates, one drives across a stone bridge shaded by mature oaks, past enclaves of roses and limestone stairs guarded by carved lions, to a paved courtyard inlaid with a compass mosaic. The house faces a motor court, surrounded by a loggia, and a hillside fountain made of giant stone clamshells. The soothing sound of tumbling water tickles the memory, and one feels transported mysteriously and immediately to the Italian countryside.

Sorrell's vision for the house was expansive and orderly, with high ceilings, columns and arches lending each room a sense of soaring space. He aligned the living, dining and music rooms as well as the master suite along a single axis on the first floor.

The vaulted ceiling of the entrance gallery, which leads to all the principal rooms, is banded in terra-cotta, painted with putti and illuminated by bronze chandeliers. The regal tone is underscored by an eighteenth-century Italian console table that stands beneath a nine-




AFTER



LEFT: Identical arches and Tuscan columns serve to link the dining, living and music rooms. OPPOSITE: The elaborately coffered dining room ceiling contains more than 75 separately cast pieces. Scalamandré chair fabric. Brunschwig & Fils wallcovering. Stark carpet.

BELOW: The Baroque-style music room "is like a private retreat in a hotel or club, where I'll go to read and have a glass of wine," says Jim Zaleski. Drapery fabric and wallcovering from Decorators Walk. Clarence House wing chair fabric. Scalamandré striped chair fabric.

teenth-century painting of the Virgin Mary, done in the style of Raphael.

To take full advantage of the house's hilltop site and misty ocean views, Sorrell installed generous rows of French doors at the end of each large room. But in the living room, it's not the ocean that first captures one's attention. Rather, eyes are drawn upward to the ceiling, carved and painted with a Tiepolo-style scene of the myth of Icarus. Jim Zaleski, an engineer who devised a handheld computer to perform automotive diagnostics, was drawn to this cautionary tale of invention and hubris and points out medallions extolling virtue, study, discipline and art. Sorrell considers the artist, Kurt Wenner, to be "the finest fresco and mural painter in the United States." Wenner spent a year painting the huge scene on canvas, which was then mounted on the ceiling.

"We wanted an ornate interior inspired by the palaces of Venice," Jim Zaleski says. At Sorrell's suggestion, Los Angeles–based John Cottrell was brought aboard to oversee the interior design. "When I started, a lot had already been done," Cottrell says. "The house was framed, and the rooms were plastered, but there was no color or detail."

Within this house of elaborately painted ceilings and intricate moldings, cornices and mantels, however, Cottrell opted for relative simplicity. "My input was the finish: the furnishings, the floors, the basic palette. We started with the rugs after seeing an old Aubusson that had an earth background with wonderful raspberry and turquoise and gold in it. It was French, not Italian, but I saw those colors in the house." Cottrell had copies of the eighteenth-century rug



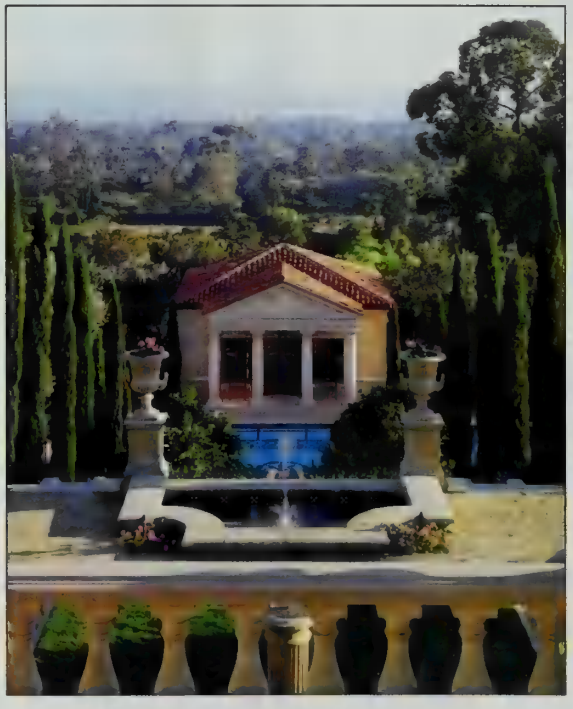
made and used them to unify the living, dining and music rooms. "John incorporated the faded, patched areas of the original into the design," says Jim Zaleski, who was fascinated by the process.

The rug plays a part in what he calls his "night and day living room." Two rose silk sofas are placed back to back so that one faces the windows to the sea for daytime vistas, while the other faces the carved-stone-and-terra-cotta fireplace.

continued on page 246



ABOVE: The master bedroom "began with just an idea for a ceiling," says Cottrell. RIGHT: The bed is a copy of one owned by the late designer Michael Taylor. Scalamandré chaise and bed brocade. Stroheim & Romann table skirt. Decorators Walk drapery and armchair fabrics.



ABOVE: Adherence to classical symmetry informs the view to the pool and the poolhouse, whose portico is based on that of Palladio's Villa Emo. The fountain is also a Jacuzzi.





ROOMS FOR IMPROVEMENT

A FRESH OUTLOOK BRIGHTENS A DATED LAKESIDE RETREAT

Text by Jeffrey Simpson
Photography by Edward J. North


BEFORE


AFTER

You really made a mistake," said Leonard Lauder to his good friends Marjorie Reed Gordon and her husband, Ellery Gordon. "This is the ugliest house I've ever seen."

Lauder, speaking unguardedly but sincerely, was referring to a cottage that the couple had just purchased. Marjorie Reed Gordon, who has written books on entertaining and Venetian glass, describes it as having had "pea-green shingles on the outside and a stained avocado-green shag rug inside," and adds, "It also had knotty-pine paneling, a BarcaLounger, ceiling fans, a plastic rubber plant and a fondue set. Everything that was wrong

"It takes full advantage of its surroundings," Marjorie Reed Gordon says of the weekend retreat in upstate New York she shares with her husband, Ellery Gordon. TOP: "The house had green siding and awkward roof pitches." ABOVE: Latticework offsets the new cedar shingles.



RIGHT: Black-and-white Staffordshire ware fills the niches flanking the fireplace, the focal point of a conversation area in the great room. Orchid-print pillow and seat cushion fabric from Boussac Fadini. Fire surround moldings and pilasters from Enkeboll Designs.


THE GARDEN DESIG
BOTANI





TOP AND ABOVE: Sliding glass doors and a wall were removed, a doorway was closed up, and the ceiling was raised to form the great room. RIGHT: "The French doors bring both lake and garden views inside." Boussac Fadini fabric and Houlès trim on scroll-back slipper chairs.



ABOVE: "Our primary goal was to create an element of surprise, as the lake only reveals itself when you enter the house," says Reed Gordon, with Ellery Gordon.






BEFORE


IN PROGRESS

FAR LEFT AND LEFT: "We felt that the barely seven-foot-high ceilings were oppressive, so we asked for a fourteen-foot raised ceiling and a series of clerestory windows to provide a light-flooded environment for the dining area of the great room," explains Reed Gordon.

BELOW: A gilt French chandelier illuminates the dining area, which looks out to the covered veranda. OPPOSITE: "The walls were painted to resemble the whitewashed old planks of a Maine boathouse," Reed Gordon points out. Floral pillow fabric from Brunschwig & Fils.


AFTER

with the sixties was there."

What was right about the house was its setting, on a small lake surrounded by the wooded hills of a nature preserve in New York's Westchester County, an hour's drive northeast of New York City. "You don't see the lake until you've come through the house," Reed Gordon explains. "And even on the dank day in February when I first saw it, it was enchanting—not another building in view and the house sited almost as though it was floating on the water." She called her husband on her cell phone and said, "I'm walking down to the shore between boulders that make it seem like I'm on Capri."

She was alone because Ellery Gordon, a manufacturer of men's and women's apparel—after a frustrating hunt for a weekend retreat that he characterizes as "negative voyeurism"—had declared, "I'm not going to look at one more place." Torn between the exhaustion from the search and his wife's infectious enthusiasm, he said in response to her call, "Buy it. Don't negotiate. Don't ask for an engineering report. Just buy it."

Then they had to decide



ABOVE: The master bedroom faces the veranda and pergola, which follow the entire length of the lakeside façade of the house. The bed, draped in Indian taffeta, is crowned with a coronet. "It's like waking up in a golden barge in an enchanted forest," says Reed Gordon.



RIGHT: "We designed a roofed and sheltered area on the veranda to correspond with the dining area inside. Everyone wants to eat outside, though. This spot has become our summer living room." The rattan furniture dates from the 1930s. Fern print from Brunschwig & Fils.

what to do with their prize.

"I 'think pink,'" says Reed Gordon, quoting the old Kay Thompson line from the movie *Funny Face*. "I wanted to start decorating from the moment we bought it, but Ellery said, 'There has to be a house there first to decorate.'"

Ellery Gordon, who is six-foot-four, had experience redesigning houses to his scale, physically and imaginatively. "There were some restrictions," he notes. "We're in what's called a wetlands buffer zone, so according to state environmental guide-



lines, we couldn't change the footprint of the house." What they could change was the height of the ceilings, the tiny windows that only gave tantalizing glimpses of the view and the series of boxy rooms.

"We wanted to open the house up inside and open it to the lake," says Gordon. "And that entailed creating a great room with French doors on the water side." The couple put a fourteen-foot-high lantern ceiling over the dining area, with a row of clerestory windows on all four sides. Light pours in from above.

The presence of the lake is constant and constantly changing. "It's spring fed," says Gordon, "and so the morning fog burns off unevenly, leaving islands of mist."

In order to take advantage of the view, the Gordons designed a veranda with a pergola for the waterfront side of the house. It reminds them of happy times spent on the lakes of northern Italy and enables them to relax, read and dine close to the shifting, shimmering land- and waterscape.

On the landward side, they planted an old-fashioned garden of buddleias, hollyhocks and foxgloves, with the help of landscape architect Barbara Paca. They enclosed the space with a latticework fence that gives a sense of privacy. "The lattice complements the cedar shingles on the house," says Reed Gordon. "Our place looks like it could be a summer retreat in Maine or on Nantucket."

Inside, Reed Gordon wanted the furnishings to be a surprise. "I thought this should be more elegant than a con-

continued on page 247

Wrought iron furniture rests on the dock, which is located at the base of the rocky promontory that the house sits on. "We chose the gray-and-white-striped canvas to harmonize with the silvery patina of the weathered dock and cabana," notes Reed Gordon.

SUTTON PLACE TRANSFORMATION

A DESIGNER'S OWN MANHATTAN APARTMENT IS REVIVED WITH COLOR AND DASH





BEFORE PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY THOMAS J. FLEMING

"It had egg-yolk-yellow walls and a wall-to-wall avocado-colored shag carpet," interior designer Thomas J. Fleming (far left) of Irvine & Fleming says of the apartment he refurbished in a prewar building on Manhattan's East River.

LEFT: "The entrance hall was a long, undistinguished space." OPPOSITE: Fleming dropped the ceiling to hide several asymmetrical beams, installed recessed lighting and applied vinyl to the walls "to get texture," he says, before painting them Venetian red.

Interior Design by Thomas J. Fleming of Irvine & Fleming/Text by Annette Tapert/After Photography by Peter R. Peirce

It was not interesting architectural details that attracted interior designer Thomas J. Fleming of Irvine & Fleming to his 850-square-foot, one-bedroom apartment. Aside from a step-down living room that was reminiscent of an Art Déco movie set, the apartment was nondescript. How unimpressive was it? Consider: bilious yellow walls, an avocado-green shag carpet, a grungy bath and a kitchen the size of a small closet. And, for all that, overpriced.

What the apartment did have was a Sutton Place South address overlooking a row of stunning town houses and a view of the Fifty-ninth Street bridge so quintessentially New York that it would make even a jaded heart skip a beat. "I had decorated an apartment in the building years ago," Fleming says, "and it was always in the back of my mind that someday I'd like to live there." That was not just a whim but a destiny. "My grandfather was a steelworker, and he helped build that bridge. I thought it would be wonderful to have an apartment where you could see it."

The move was a classic New York real estate saga. Fleming waited for the price to come down. He made an offer that was accepted. In the meantime, the deal fell through on the apartment he then owned. He reneged on Sutton Place. Someone else made an offer. "By that time I was determined to live in the building and made a bid for a studio. Just as we were finalizing the sale, I realized I didn't want to live in one room. So I went back to inquire about this apartment. The other offer hadn't worked out, and the place was still for sale. So I bought it.

"I have a house in the country," he says (see *Architectural Digest*, September 1997), "and I'm only in New York Monday through Thursday. Sometimes an apartment that gets as little use as this one does can look sterile. I wanted a place that would make me want to be there. And it's worked out that way. I stay home in the evenings a lot more than I used to."

Fleming's structural renovations were focused on the entrance hall. The long, unremarkable space "had too many doors, asymmetrical beams and a low soffit," remembers Fleming, who began by gutting a large closet and replacing it with a wall of bookshelves. To hide the irregular positioning of the beams, he dropped the ceilings, and he put in an arch to eliminate the soffit and "visually break up the hall." He applied vinyl to the walls and painted them Venetian red. "You use vinyl to get texture, then paint. That way the color you put on takes on different tones." Finally, he rebuilt the ply-



BELOW: The fire surround "was out of proportion for the living room." RIGHT: Fleming put in a farmhouse mantelpiece, which he stripped and glazed. Lee Jofa drapery fabric; Cowtan & Tout sofa chintz; Clarence House green mohair on armchair; Christopher Norman pillow fabric.

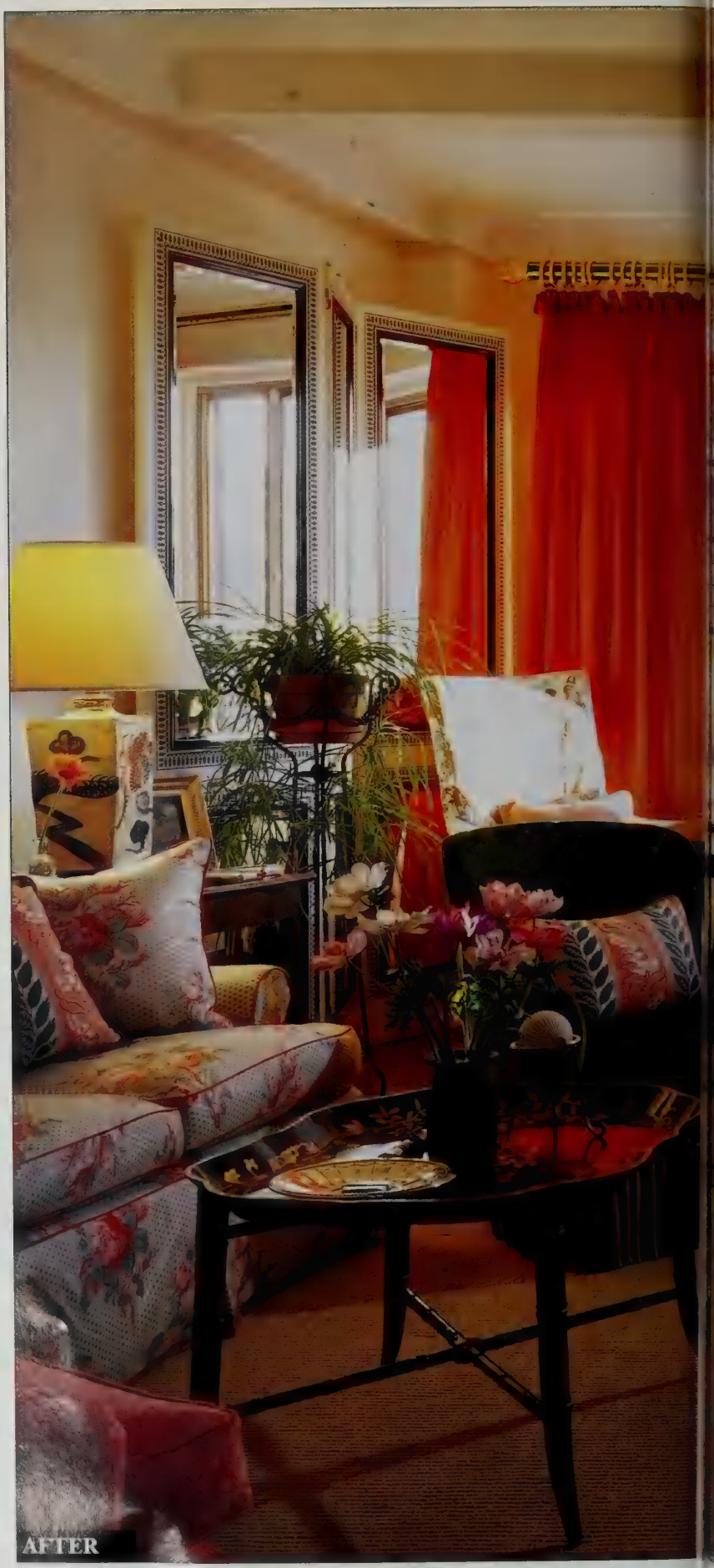

BEFORE

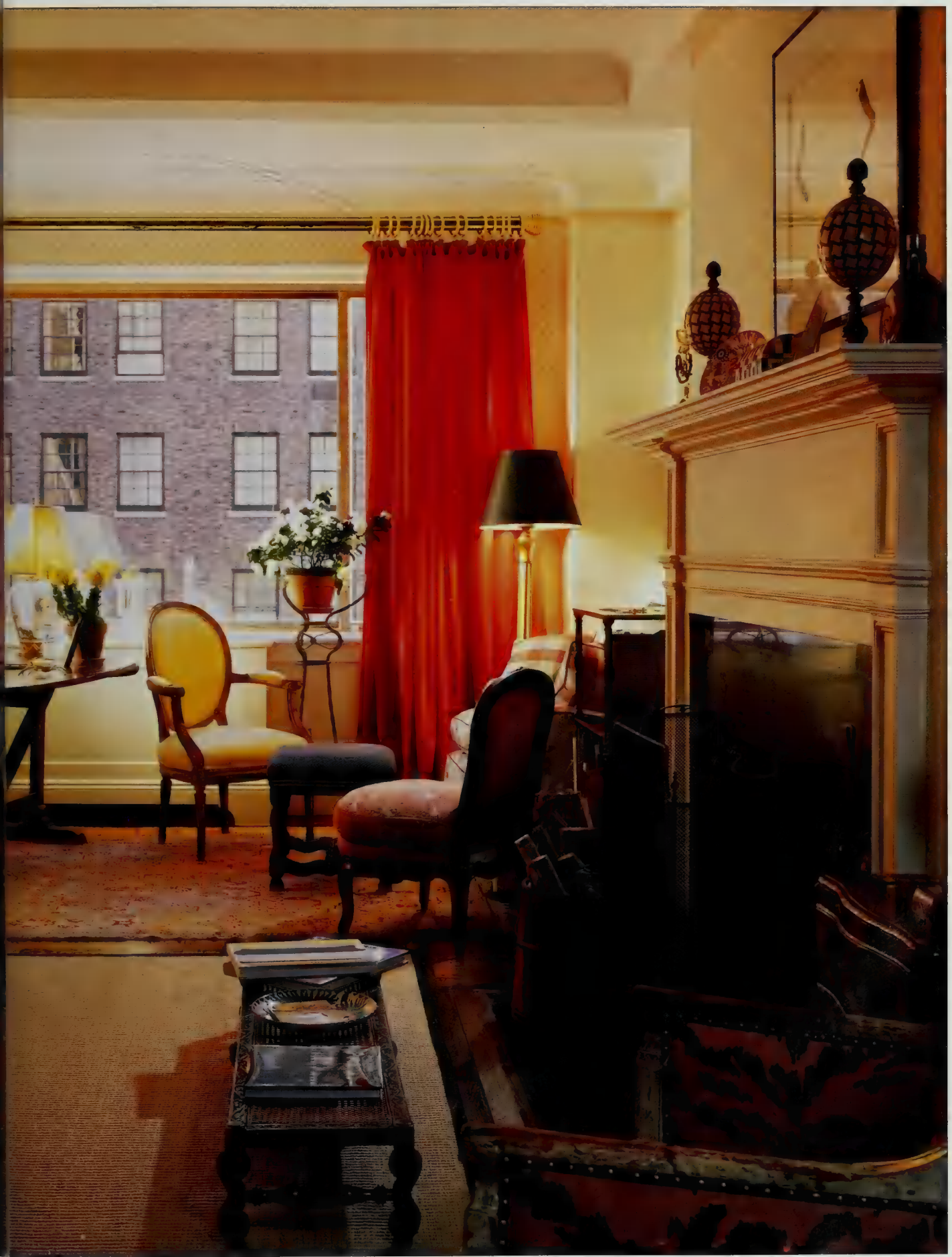
wood steps that descend to the living room in oak.

The living room required fewer changes. Fleming replaced a porphyry mantelpiece that he deemed too small for the room with a large but shallow pine one that came from an old Long Island farmhouse. "It was mostly just a façade," he says. To give it depth, his contractors, Alex and Jane Marinos—"the mom and pop of New York contractors," he quips—extended the sides and shelf with pine, then stripped and glazed it. "It looks more sophisticated than it really should," Fleming notes. He preserved the original cove moldings but removed the battered baseboards and installed some that were taller and more in keeping with the prewar style of the building. In this room, as throughout, the hardwood floors were scraped and stained a dark walnut.

Though he chose a wallcovering with

"WHEN YOU'RE PUTTING A ROOM TOGETHER, WHATEVER WORK WAS DONE THAT DAY IS ALL YOU SEE."


AFTER





AFTER

BELOW: "There were eight phone jacks in the living room, and the moldings were all chewed up." LEFT: The cove moldings were preserved, but the baseboards are new. Sanderson wallcovering with Christopher Hyland border; Clarence House stripe on méridienne; Stark sisal rug.



a cool off-white-and-beige pattern, he thought that its contrasting border might attract too much attention. "When you're putting a room together, whatever work was done that day or week is all that you see. I seriously thought of changing the border. It wasn't until I hung pictures that I decided it was okay." Among the pieces in the room is a beveled-mirror folding screen—made from the doors he ripped out of the entrance hall—that reflects the Fifty-ninth Street bridge.

The main problem with the bedroom was the walls: "They were uneven, and a shallow recess was twelve inches from the ceiling at one end and twenty inches at another." Fleming furred out the walls, boxed in the recess and drywalled over a side window, "which gave me a place to put my bed." He then applied a yellow striped wallcovering.

The centerpiece of the bedroom had to be the view—even if that meant sacrificing balance and scale. "The two mirrors hanging next to the bedroom window make absolutely no sense," says Fleming. "They're there because they let me see the bridge from different places. I sit on the chair beside the chest of drawers to put my shoes on, and I can see the view from the mirrors."

One of the reasons that Fleming's new apartment looks so lived in may be that most of its contents have traveled with him. "Possessions should move through your life," observes the designer. "Almost everything was in my previous apartment." The living room and



bedroom draperies were remade to fit the new windows. A few upholstered pieces were simply slipcovered. Several items, such as the méridienne in the hall, had been in storage. And certain pieces are the touchstones of a long and distinguished career. "The club chair in the bedroom goes back to the early days of the firm, before it was Irvine and Fleming. The eighteenth-century English desk in the living room represents one year's bonus from ages ago."

The fondness for recycling is, in fact, part of the design philosophy of Fleming and his partner, Keith Irvine, who this year will celebrate forty years of working together. "Part of our approach is to try to use the furniture clients already own," explains Fleming. "Some people don't want to, but often that's because they don't see another use for a piece of furniture. A person gets a mind-set for a piece, like, 'It can only be used as a bedside table.' The same goes for the clients we've worked with over the years. We like to move their furniture around in their existing apartment, or, if they move, we encourage them to use the same pieces."

Now that Thomas Fleming's apartment is finished, is there anything he wishes he'd done differently? "I can still see adding a few more architectural details," he says. "In time I may embellish the opening between the entrance hall and the living room with pilasters." He adds, "From day one I wanted a loft on this street, and they just don't exist. I've thought of breaking down the wall between the living room and the bedroom to have one big space. If I get crazy enough, I just might do it someday." □

ABOVE: In the bedroom, Fleming furred out uneven walls, rehung the door in the opposite direction ("The contractors balked"), replaced the baseboards and covered the walls in a yellow stripe. "Every surface, except in the closets, is wallpapered or covered with something."

OPPOSITE: A window that didn't let in much light was closed off "to give more freedom to the room," Fleming says. "I was undecided which side would house the bed, telephone and TV, so I had both sides wired." Boussac Fadini fabric for headboard and bed skirt.



Interior Design by Thomas Britt, ASID/Text by Jeffrey Simpson
Before Photography by Maurice Prather/After Photography by Durston Saylor



A KANSAS CONVERT

HEIGHTENING THE STYLE QUOTIENT IN THE MIDWEST

More than a decade ago clients of New York designer Thomas Britt moved into a large Tuscan-style villa in the greater Kansas City area, where Britt has deep roots and continuing connections, both personal and professional. Britt declared that house to have been "the object of his fantasy for years" when he completed the design in the mid-eighties (see *Architectural Digest*, August 1985). When the clients decided they wanted to live on a quieter scale, they came back to Britt to help them design a smaller house.

A quieter scale, but not a less grand one. "These people come from four generations of midwestern families," says Britt. "They've always had good furniture, and they've added important pieces to what they inherited. There was no question that the new house had to complement the pieces they already owned."

The house that the clients found is what Britt describes as "1950s French style," and although it had generous front and rear courtyards, the rooms were low and not very big. "As soon as I walked in," says Britt, "I thought it was too cramped. Even a few pieces from their former house would never fit there. I wondered what in the world I was going to do."

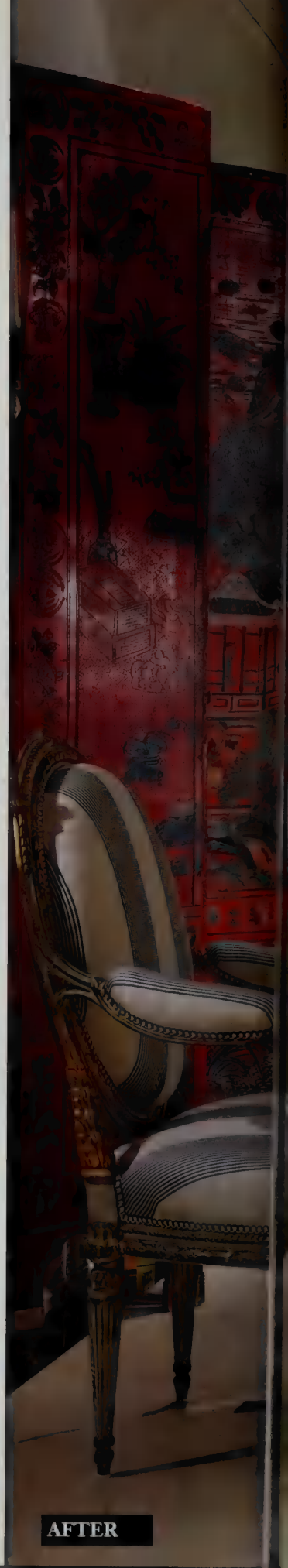
The solution, says Britt, was "to go all the way up." The kitchen and one of the bedrooms already had cathedral ceilings. With the help of his colleague, architectural designer Peter Napolitano, as well as the Kansas City–area firm of Nearing, Staats, Prelogar & Jones Architects, Britt tore out the ceilings of the living room and the dining room and raised them to follow the sloped roofline.

To dignify the rooms, Britt and Napolitano applied heavy panel moldings to the walls and ceilings, which, paradoxically, make the rooms seem bigger. The height is further emphasized by pairs of arched mirrors that were hung facing one another in each room—"mirror images," Britt says with a chuckle—and run from the peak of the roof to the baseboards. These kinds of Neoclassical details, raised to the Baroque or even Mannerist scale, make fitting backdrops for the clients' antique pieces.

In the living room, Britt installed a marble Directoire fire surround at the bottom of one mirror, but in the dining room, which has no fireplace, he put a Louis XV black-lacquered coromandel commode at the foot of one mirror and a Georgian side table at the foot of the other.

In an equally pragmatic





Thomas Britt, with the help of his colleague, architectural designer Peter Napolitano, expanded the interiors of a modest residence (above) in the Kansas City area. RIGHT AND FAR RIGHT: Limestone-and-granite floors were laid in the entrance hall. Bergamo stripe.



BELOW: The living room—like the rest of the house—had low ceilings. RIGHT: "We blasted them out to make as large a space as possible." Donald Maxcy designed the lighting. Frederick P. Victoria & Son upholstered open-arm chairs in living room and gallery; Schumacher toile.



BEFORE

TO DIGNIFY THE ROOMS, BRITT ADDED HEAVY PANEL MOLDING TO THE WALLS AND CEILINGS.

but less respectful spirit, Britt took the clients' Hepplewhite-style dining chairs and sent them to New York, where they were stripped, gessoed and gilded. "Now they look so glittery, they seem to be dancing together," he says. Similarly, dhurries he had had made in India for the old residence were cut down for use in this one. "Dhurries are less serious than other rugs," Britt observes. "It was good to use them in the previous, grander house to undercut all the opulence; and it pleased the clients to be able to use them yet again."

Another change was the black-and-white palette. ("The former house was predominantly pink, salmon and coral," Britt notes.) The entrance hall floor was laid with beige-limestone tiles and black-granite details; the living room and dining room

AFTER



BELOW: The dining room had been painted red and yellow. RIGHT: After opening up the space, Britt applied panel molding to the pitched ceilings, repainted using white and gray tones and hung huge arched mirrors on opposite walls "to reflect and accent the room's height."

walls were painted in shades of pale gray and white; the living room furniture was covered in black-and-white toile; and even the kitchen has stools upholstered in black-and-white fabric.

Colorful accents are scattered throughout—red Chinese porcelain lamps, coral Chinese pillows and a green eighteenth-century Dutch marquetry cabinet are in the living room, and a pair of Anglo-Indian cabinets painted black and gold stand in the guest bedroom. In the long gallery that runs behind the living room and dining room to the bedrooms, a red coromandel folding screen gives interest to what otherwise would be a blank wall.

Just off the gallery is an alcove with a pair of nineteenth-century Italian armchairs, which Britt covered in black-and-white-striped fabric, and a black-lacquered chinoiserie cabinet that conceals a television and a bar. "That's where my clients relax," Britt says.

They completely redesigned the wing where the master bedroom and guest bedroom are located. "We raised the ceilings, tore out walls and put in new windows," says Britt. "We created a core between the bedrooms that holds two baths — with domed ceilings and chinoiserie lanterns—and two dressing rooms." The guest bedroom is decorated in black and white, with a soft red dhurrie to add warmth.



ABOVE: "We turned the volumes of the rooms into something entirely different," says Britt, in an alcove off the gallery. "It wasn't so much about doubling or quadrupling the spaces as it was about making them appropriate for the furniture." Coraggio sheer drapery fabric.



The master bedroom is an homage to the colors of a Tuscan villa. The walls are painted a soft pink, and the bedcovering, upholstery fabric and draperies are a coral taffeta print. For the window at the end of the room, Britt made an arched valance to repeat the shape of the mirrors elsewhere in the house. "We couldn't make a real arched window, because it would have looked odd from the outside," Britt explains. "But after I raised the ceiling, the end of the room needed something imposing to meet that high central beam."

On the lower level of the house, he constructed two bedrooms and a sitting room with black-lacquered walls, and he reconfigured the rear garden to accommodate a swimming pool. "On the terrace, we were able to use all the garden furniture from the old house," he says. "And downstairs we put the wicker furniture designed by Jean-Michel Frank that my client had in her garden room before."

By giving the residence what he describes as "soaring spaces," Britt has created a scale of continuity for clients who wanted to scale down but not scale back. □





THE MASTER BEDROOM IS AN HOMAGE TO THE COLORS OF A TUSCAN VILLA.


BEFORE

ABOVE: The master bedroom was gutted. RIGHT: Britt designed a high arched valance, which hides a rectangular front window, to echo the shape of the mirrors in the public rooms. The pyramid bookcases "emphasize the retrofit." Brunschwig & Fils silk taffeta print.



ABOVE: The black-and-white palette in the guest bedroom "keeps it crisp," Britt says. The Anglo-Indian ebonized and gilded cabinet is one of a pair. The carved and painted console in the gallery is Louis XV; the trumeau is Louis XVI. Clarence House chair fabric.


AFTER





WATERFRONT PHOENIX

REINVENTING A FIRE-DAMAGED HOUSE OVERLOOKING THE SOUND

Architecture by Shope Reno Wharton/Interior Design by MAC II
Text by Susan Cheever/After Photography by Matt Wargo

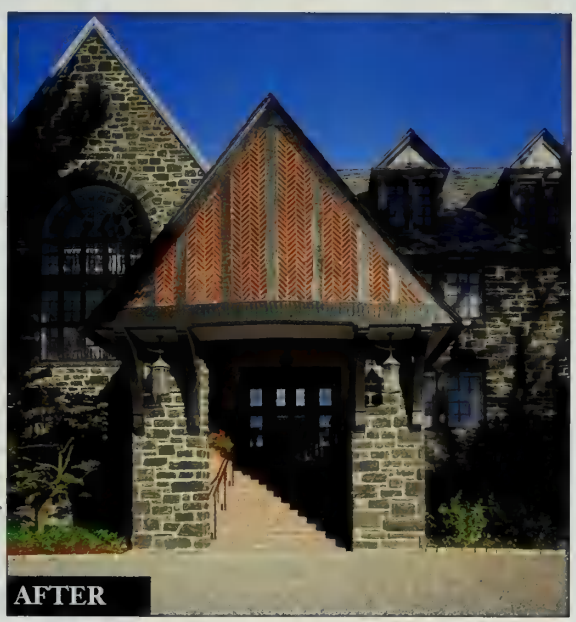
For nearly a century it rose from the shimmer of Long Island Sound like a fairy-tale castle. Slate gables and brick chimneys jutted into the endless sky, and windows seemed to radiate a mysterious light. Trading schooners passed on their way from New York to Boston. Generations of herons nested in the rocks near the seawall. But when architect Allan Shope first saw it three years ago, this dream house on the Westchester coastline was a charred, dripping reality. A fire had gutted the interior, leaving splintered wood and collapsed walls within the stone shell. "It was wrecked," says Bernard Wharton, Shope's partner. "It was as bad as you can imagine."

Now, dream and reality have come together in a renovation for a Manhattan investment banker and his family. "It's the most dramatic example of before and after that I've ever seen," says Shope. Outside, the house retains its dark majesty; inside, it is a dance of light and watery rhythms built by Shope and Wharton and decorated by Mica Ertegun and the late Chessy Rayner of MAC II. The morning sun streams through the draperies in the master bedroom. From the family room the owners can watch the moon rise above their private horizon. "I love to come in the door





BEFORE PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY SHOPE RENO WHARTON



ABOVE: "The clients loved the property, but it wasn't a friendly house," says architect Allan Shope of Shope Reno Wharton, who reconstructed a fire-damaged residence built in the 1920s on Long Island Sound. "The question was how to make it fun and alive."

FAR LEFT: The house's entrance was dark, and the roof needed repair. LEFT: Shope and partner Bernard Wharton opened up the entranceway with glass doors that allow in light and offer a view of the water beyond. "The idea was to draw you inside and through the house."

every night and get that immediate sense of the water," says the husband. "I can never get enough of it."

The original house, which was built in the 1920s, had dozens of small rooms. "It was a gloomy and unhappy house," Shope says. "It was claustrophobic. The old kitchen was a lifeless box." When the fire swept away the interior, it also changed the way the owners looked at the world. "It was such a traumatic experience, but something like that gives you a greater appreciation for what you have," says the wife. "We had to consider what we really wanted." "We had to start from scratch," the husband adds.

BELOW: MAC II's Mica Ertegun, who designed the interiors, with, from left to right, MAC II's co-project designer David Barritt, Shope, project architect Jerry Hupy and Wharton.





ABOVE: The entrance hall blocked the view. RIGHT: The architects installed three tiers of windows and raised the ceiling. Ertegun used colors that "have to do with nature" throughout. Kentshire Galleries marble pedestals. Darius carpet.





AFTER

RIGHT: "The living room was smoke-stained," says Wharton. The architects installed lighter paneling and enlarged the windows for brightness. "We wanted to maintain the house's dignity, but we also wanted something more informal."

ABOVE: "We mixed old and new," Ertegun says. Games table, A la Vieille Russie; consoles, Florian Papp. Drapery fabric, Schumacher. Pillow fabrics, Clarence House. Chairs at left, Manuel Canovas fabric with Houlès trim. Decorators Walk sofa fabric. Patterson, Flynn & Martin carpet.



Starting from scratch was a blessing as far as the architects were concerned. "We needed to look at the house with a wider expanse of the imagination," Wharton says. "We thought about structure, views and water. We didn't want to step too hard on any of them. We wanted to let the setting do the work for us."

To create a center for the house, Shope, Wharton and project architect Jerry Hupy built a soaring two-story entrance gallery, with a three-tiered wall of windows. "All you see there is



the horizon," Wharton says. "We tried to bring the water into the house." Ertegun placed a columned nineteenth-century architect's drafting table in front of the windows to emphasize the vastness beyond. "We used a simple trick that Frank Lloyd Wright was brilliant at," notes Wharton. "He would compress space, as we do at the entrance, and then release."

To the west, the forty-foot-long living room has French doors opening toward the Sound and casement windows facing the inlet behind the house. The decorators planned the room around the collection of nineteenth-century pieces the family had purchased during two previous MAC II renovations—one of their New York apartment and another of a house in Rye, New York. "We wanted to keep it traditional without being stuffy," says MAC II's Mica Duffy, who, along with David Barritt, was the project designer.

Light pine paneling replaced the fire-damaged walnut veneer. A marble-topped Regency table and George III giltwood consoles contrast with a jute carpet. Simple gauze draperies frame the windows. Back-to-back sofas, designed by MAC II, divide the room into two areas: one facing the fireplace and the other focused on a television set.

"We decided to have the TV in the living room," says the husband. "That way we knew the room would get some use." When G. K. Chesterton wrote in 1910 that "the home is the only place of liberty... the only spot on the earth where a man can alter arrangements... or indulge in a whim," he might have been thinking about the way this twen-



"IT WAS A GLOOMY, UNHAPPY HOUSE," SHOPE SAYS. "IT WAS CLAUSTROPHOBIC. THE KITCHEN WAS A LIFELESS BOX."

OPPOSITE: In the dining room, the designers used a translucent yellow glaze over the paneling to provide a luminous background for the family's antiques. An 1815 English convex gilt mirror hangs over the fireplace. The circa 1800 chandelier is Swedish.

RIGHT: "The kitchen was choppy and had no character," says Wharton. BELOW: The architects used fir for the walls and cabinets to unify the space. Wood trusses scale down the room and direct the gaze toward the view. "The beams' shape also evokes a ship."


BEFORE


AFTER



"WE THOUGHT ABOUT STRUCTURE, VIEWS AND WATER. WE WANTED TO LET THE SETTING DO THE WORK FOR US."





ABOVE: Although it faced the water, the terrace "was completely uninviting and had no connection to the house," says Wharton. RIGHT: The architects added four sets of glass doors to provide easier access. "We changed the focus of the house from inward to outward."

TOP: The master bedroom had been a small, single-story space. ABOVE: Shope and Wharton transformed it into a double-height tower. Ertegun covered the walls and furniture in a blue-and-white toile, from Decorators Walk. Antique Aubusson carpet from Stark.

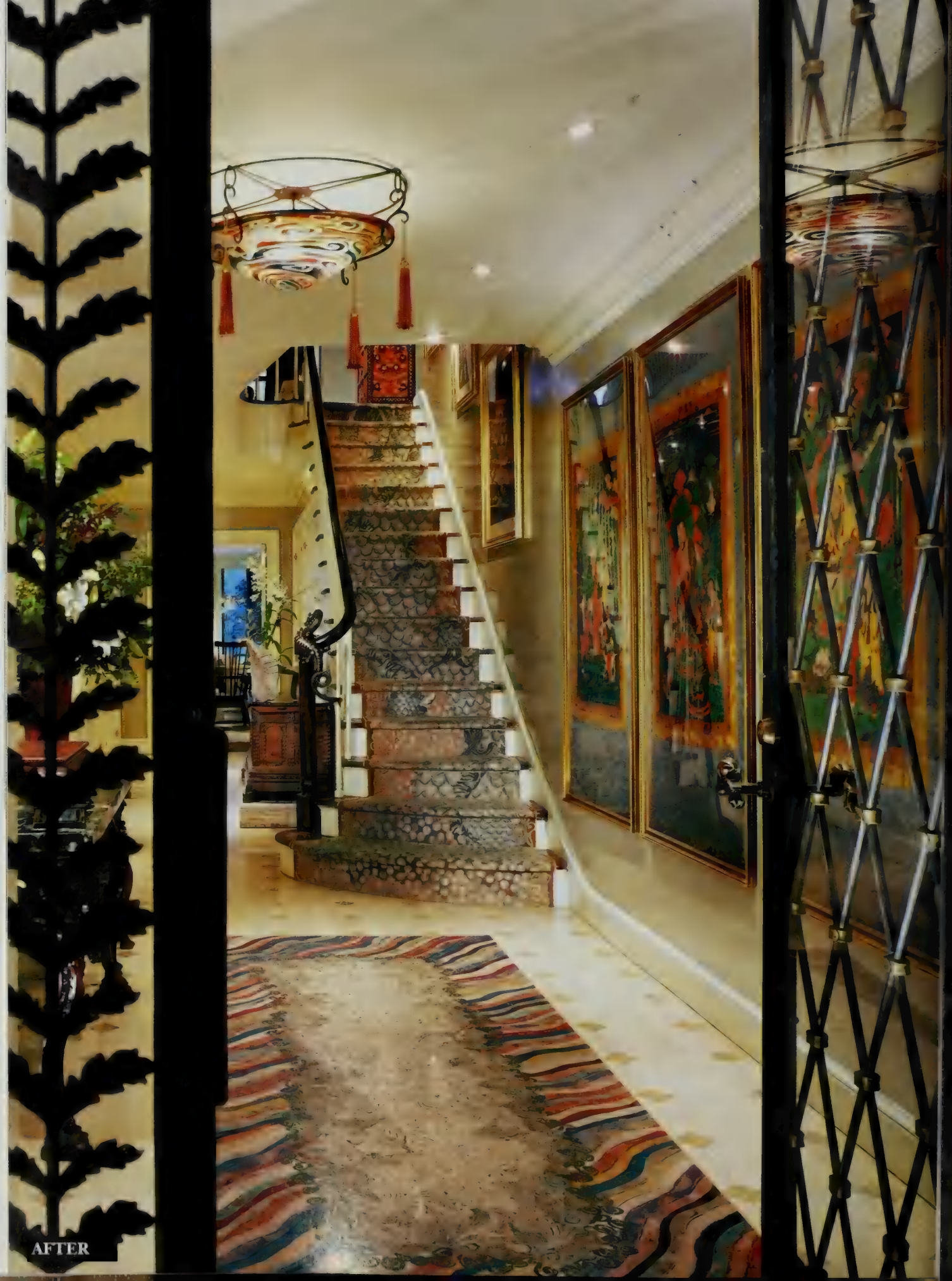
tieth-century man walks through the front door at night, slips off his loafers and sits back to watch Tiger Woods break par on the sports channel. For just such a moment, MAC II designed a supremely elegant recliner—a daybed of Honduras mahogany covered in an antique brocade.

The other end of the house is anchored by a long kitchen where dramatic curved trusses loom over deep-green-granite counters like the ribs of a benevolent whale. "The rhythm of the trusses moves your eye across that space and out across the Sound," says Shope. "The room feels as if it's twenty feet wide and six miles long." In the adjacent family room, the designers placed a trestle table and Windsor chairs against plain white walls that are hung with Berenice Abbott photographs. The formal dining room has a contemporary limestone mantel and simple pale-yellow-and-white paneling, set off by a Regency-style table and chairs and a nineteenth-century chandelier that the couple acquired in London. For the floor, Ertegun used a nineteenth-century Ushak she found in Turkey.

At the top of the grand staircase—

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AFTER


AFTER

MANHATTAN REORIENTATION

A COLLECTION OF ASIAN ART INSPIRES A RADIANT TOWN HOUSE MAKEOVER





Botero (above) introduced exotic details and colors. "I wanted to expand my clients' comfort zone." ABOVE LEFT: The entrance hall door was replaced with a bronze-and-iron gate.

I'm afraid we've gotten a bit carried away," a Manhattan businessman says of the considerable Asian art collection that occupies nearly every available space in the newly renovated town house where he lives with his wife and their youngest daughter.

The couple's enthusiasm for Tibetan *thankas*—religious paintings on cloth prized for their bold colors and complex iconographies—began fifteen years ago in a Madison Avenue gallery, where one beautiful example "struck an emotional chord." As their collection grew to include Chinese, Korean, pre-Columbian and Indian works of art, many acquired on trips abroad, so did the need for more functional and spacious living quarters.

When the native New Yorkers purchased the five-floor, eleven-room neo-Georgian building on Manhattan's Upper East Side, their immediate goals were simple. "I wanted to be able to walk out onto a terrace, and my husband wanted to hang pictures on the walls," says the wife. A tour of their residence, however, reveals a much grander vision—a cross-cultural dreamscape whose dramatic colors, textures and shapes animate every room.

While the couple admit to indulging in their passion for collecting, they never suspected that they would likewise succumb to the fanciful imagination of New York–based interior designer Samuel Botero, who saw them through an arduous eighteen-month renovation.

"We worked very closely together to create something out of the ordinary," says the Colombian-born Botero, who is noted for residential projects, which include the houses of Princess Yasmin Aga Khan, Merel Poloway and Raul Julia, and fashion designer Ken Scott. "The overall design, from intricate custom-designed rugs and stone floors to light fixtures with hand-painted glass, reflects the symbols,

The clients' collection of Tibetan art was the point of departure for a Manhattan town house renovated by Samuel Botero. LEFT: *Thankas*—Tibetan religious paintings—line the entrance hall. A dragon motif, based on images found in Tibetan art, enlivens the stair runner.

Interior Design by Samuel Botero/Text by Dana Micucci
Before Photography by Edward J. North/After Photography by Phillip H. Ennis



RIGHT: "The living room was plain." BELOW: Botero designed a new mantel and glazed the walls aubergine. Clarence House fabrics on canapé, armchairs and J. Robert Scott sofa. Drapery silk, Osborne & Little. Chest, David Duncan Antiques. Donghia club chairs.

OPPOSITE: In the dining room, Botero combined gold pigment with copper for a subtle sheen. "I wanted the space to be very dramatic and have a warm glow," he says. A pair of Venetian bronze lanterns and a 16th-century wine vessel from Nepal rest on painted Tibetan cabinets.



motifs and colors found within the family's Tibetan art collection."

Botero's flamboyant, eclectic style was perfectly suited to his clients' tastes. He transformed the classic English aesthetic of the previous interior with vibrant red, purple and gold tones and materials that range from silk, wool and chenille to leather and tapestry.

The designer also enlisted the services of a fêng shui consultant to advise on the use of color and the placement of objects to ensure optimal energy flow.

Each room has a distinctive character, incorporating a mix of antique, reproduction and contemporary furnishings that complement the art. In the living room, centuries-old *thankas* glow like jewels on glazed egg-plant-colored walls. A Tibetan appliquéd-silk dance apron representing the wrathful face of Mahakala, the protector deity of Buddhism, hangs between two windows draped in turquoise taffeta. Botero adapted a hand-painted wood cabinet, also from Tibet, by




HIMALAYAN ART
THANGKA, BUDDHIST PAINTING OF TIBET
TAE KWON DO
Future Shock



The designer darkened the library paneling and added small spotlights and a chandelier. The lamps beside the chairs are from John Boone. Regency table, Kentshire Galleries. Clarence House fabric on ottoman and desk chair. Roman shade fabric, Brunschwig & Fils.



OPPOSITE: Botero designed a steel-and-glass surround to transform a Tibetan cabinet into a night table. "My intention was to make the piece useful while maintaining its integrity." The bed, with bronze inlay, is Spanish. Marble-and-brass lamp from Newel Art Galleries.

RIGHT: Closets flanked the fireplace in the master bedroom. BELOW: Botero changed them into arched niches to display his clients' collection of sculpture. The club chairs, wallcovering and drapery fabric are from Donghia. Leopard-print fabric from Clarence House.



adding a steel frame with geometric designs and a glass top. The piece offsets an elaborate white-marble mantel Botero designed to resemble cascading folds of fabric. Accenting this fantastic tableau are a Louis XVI–style canapé, antique Chinese cloisonné lamps and, from Spain, two nineteenth-century armchairs in carved mahogany.

The major design challenges were the spatial limitations and the restrictive vertical architecture typical of New York City town houses, according to Botero. He extracted as much usable space as possible for the family's living requirements, storage and the display of art, while keeping the basic structure of each room intact.

In the dining room, on the second floor, for example, he designed a cabinet equipped with both storage space for firewood and shelves that accommodate Tibetan bronze teapots and pre-Columbian pottery and sculptures. Exotic touches are found in the Venetian lanterns, the tole-and-stained-glass chandelier from Morocco and the upholstered lambrequins, which frame the windows. To form a cohesive backdrop, Botero painted the walls a soft, coppery gold.

Another space-saving so-

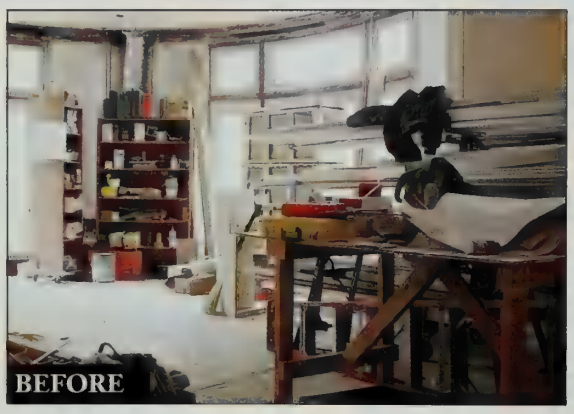
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Architecture by Andrew Skurman, AIA
Interior Design by Suzanne Tucker, ASID
Text by Penelope Rowlands
Before Photography by Jamie Hadley
After Photography by Mark Darley

NOB HILL RENEWAL

REPHRASING INTERIORS WITH A FRENCH ACCENT IN SAN FRANCISCO



A San Francisco apartment in a Beaux Arts building was given a classic French look. ABOVE: The living room's plaster walls were replaced by raised French paneling.

The word *makeover* doesn't apply. When interior designer Suzanne Tucker and architect Andrew Skurman overhauled a vast apartment on San Francisco's Nob Hill, the pair left nothing of the original behind. "There's not one square inch of what was there before," Skurman notes. "We replaced everything. We took away all the existing walls. We even put new moldings around the exterior doors."

Located at the crest of the hill, the Neoclassical structure, built in 1914, holds its own among such venerable



RIGHT: Empire table, Sotheby's. Fauteuil, Christie's. Commode, Foster-Gwin. Low table, Michael Taylor Designs. Candlestick lamp, Kentshire. Sofa and pillow fabrics, Brunschwig & Fils; center pillow, Lotus. Ottoman fabric, Old World Weavers. Jim Thompson draperies.



neighbors as the stately Pacific-Union Club and the more grandiose Mark Hopkins and Fairmont hotels. "The building is in a French style," Skurman says. "It has wonderful curved bays and French doors looking onto wrought iron balconies." But he and Tucker felt that the apartment, with its English-style crown moldings, didn't live up to the grandeur of the façade. "The apartment was trying to be French, but it wasn't doing a very good job," he says. "The quality wasn't there."

Both designer and architect loved the building's curved corners, and they resolved to continue that shape indoors. Ovals and circles became a recurring design theme, one that asserts itself right at the front door. Inspired by an eighteenth-century room in the Musée Carnavalet in Paris, the once angular entrance hall is now perfectly round. Even the dark brown cabochons in its slab marble floor are boldly round instead of the usual diamond shape. To simplify the space, two columns flanking the front door were removed. "The idea was to make it more tailored, more French," says Tucker.

The entrance "sets the tone for the shape of the other rooms," Skurman adds. He and Tucker brought to several spaces a circularity that they felt should have been there all along. Hallways that were once "short and choppy," as Tucker puts it, became curvilinear; so did the living room, which had been partly squared off. While dramatic, a rounded room can be problematic when it comes to furniture placement. Tucker's solution was to keep furniture to a minimum and "to leave a lot of open space," she explains. "We didn't want it to be all cluttered."

Tucker and her client, who was new to San Francisco, were of one mind about the interior. "I wanted something very French, very European," the client says. "Something in keeping with the building." Both were enamored of Coco Chanel's sumptuous Paris apartment on the rue Cambon (see *Architectural Digest*, September 1988), with its tawny palette, its ambers, blacks and golds—an interior Tucker calls "very rich and very inviting." The client, a striking redhead with alabaster skin, also wanted to be surrounded by shades that would complement her own high-voltage coloring. She was after bold lines, with nothing too fussy or feminine.

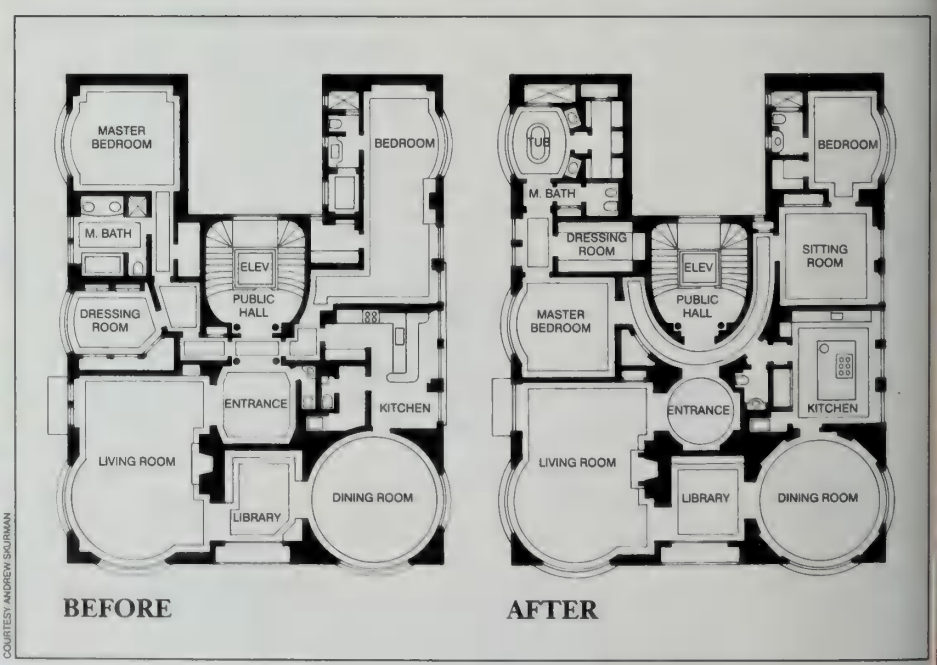
If the client coveted wonderful antiques, ones that captured Chanel's distinctive style, she also wanted a certain



informality. "I didn't want a showplace, I wanted a place to live. It's okay with me if you kick off your shoes and put your feet up on the low table. It's okay to eat pizza in the sitting room."

She and Tucker shopped for furniture in San Francisco and Los Angeles, in Paris and New York. There's an uncluttered feel to these rooms, a sense of luxuriating in space, that seems distinctly modern. And the roominess allows ample space for some of the ornate antiques, from the living room's Italian Rococo bombé commode that once be-





COURTESY ANDREW SKURMAN

"The palette came from the city's colors at night—neutral, with flattering tones," says interior designer Suzanne Tucker (above). ABOVE RIGHT: Architect Andrew Skurman redrafted the floor plan to make the apartment "become coherent in its curvilinear sensibility."

TOP: Skurman added flat recesses in the round dining room for the antiques. OPPOSITE: "I think of this as a night apartment," says the client. Baroque consoles and a pair of Louis Philippe candelabra are from Christie's. Bergamo chair fabric. Clarence House drapery fabric.



longed to Albert Hadley to an ebony-lacquered Louis XV *bureau plat* in the neighboring library.

An artful simplicity reigns throughout. What the client calls an "awful old Victorian fireplace" in the living room was replaced by a chestnut Régence mantelpiece. The English-style moldings gave way to Rococo-inspired ones with more modern straight lines and fewer fanciful motifs. The brand-new parquetry floors, laboriously distressed, might have been in place for centuries. "I wanted the second grade of wood, not the first, to get some of the knots, the details of old boards," Tucker says.


BEFORE


BEFORE

Window treatments were simplified in order to draw attention to the ever-changing cityscape.

"The client told us that the apartment would be used for entertaining," Tucker says. As such, the round dining room was crucially important. Aiming for "a Coco Chanel feel," client and designer envisioned dark lacquered walls. The exact shade, though, proved elusive until Tucker came across the perfect deep brown in the form of a bar of bittersweet Swiss chocolate. The gold ceiling (by local colorist Willem Racké) was created by distressing and glazing indi-

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AFTER


AFTER

Above Left: A sitting room was carved out of a former long, narrow bedroom. Left: "New moldings helped make the apartment seem French," says Skurman. Grasscloth wallcovering from Blumenthal. Khotan area rug, Beauvais Carpets. Bergamo drapery fabric.



"THE APARTMENT WAS TRYING TO BE FRENCH, BUT IT WASN'T DOING A VERY GOOD JOB. THE QUALITY WASN'T THERE."

OPPOSITE TOP: The master bedroom had been an awkward bath and dressing room. ABOVE: Evans & Gerst chairs. Clarence House fabric for draperies and bed hanging; Lee Jofa lining and canopy. Bedside table, Rose Tarlow. Swing-arm lamp, Christopher Norman.



Concave mirrored vanities continue the theme of curves in the new master bath, which had been the master bedroom. The marble floor, by Fox Marble, has an inlaid Régence-inspired pattern. Chandelier and sconces from Marvin Alexander. Fixtures by P. E. Guerin.

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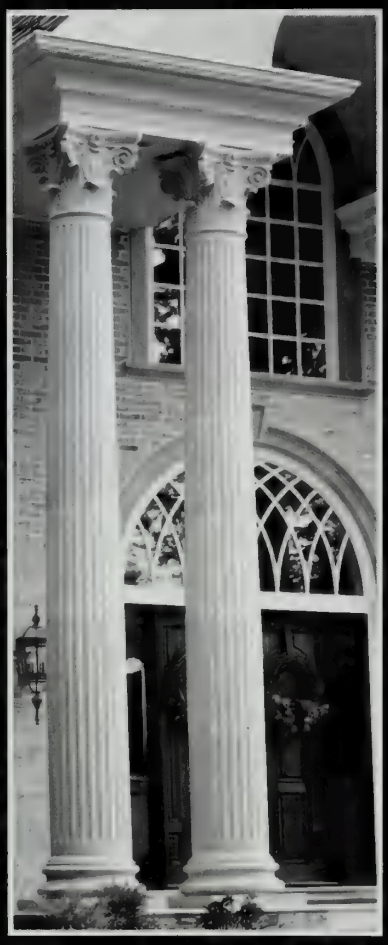
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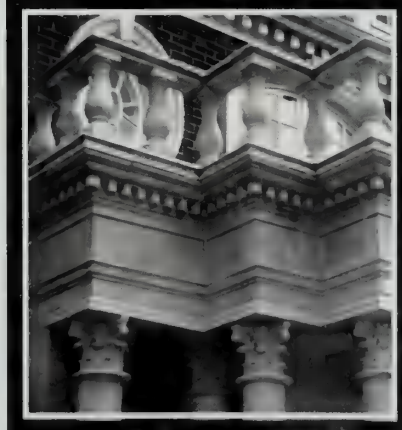
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A NEW YORK STORY

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beautiful Matisse-y colors the client loves. Buatta bought every object and every piece of furniture in the lemon-yellow-glazed living room, finding an eighteenth-century carved and gilded mirror to hang over the fireplace and handsome antiques to make the room sing. He placed the client's own lovely pictures—*Maine Blossoms* by Edward Willis Redfield and *A Lady Reading* by Richard Edward Miller—above the sofa and the piano, respectively. The Aubusson-style carpet and the colors of the floral chintzes are right out of an Impressionist painting, as are the ornate striped silk draperies framing the windows and the exciting view of Central Park. Gradually the stunning room came together.

Something drastic had to be done about the entrance hall, however, which is an inside space with no natural light. The original black-and-white-marble floors were left, but the rather tacky mirrors were jettisoned, and in their place, artist Robert Jackson painted the walls to simulate an English landscape with garden scenes, urns, flowers and summer pavilions. A demilune table, a Regency lantern, a Regency window seat covered in green moiré and an eighteenth-century Swedish sunburst gilt clock revitalized the room. A pretty powder room was created just off the space.

The sickly blue plaster was stripped from the walls of the library, which the client wanted paneled. A search was on for old paneling, but none was found to fit the room, so glorious new paneling was made by hand, carved from mahogany specifically for the area. With this background one could be in a luxurious British country house filled with books, equine and hunting pictures, vibrant prints covering the sink-into chairs, and green velvet on the sofa.

Starring in the master bedroom is a huge canopy bed; its hangings are opulently fringed floral chintz. The apricot plaid silk at the windows lends a glow to the room, and the walls are apricot too, glazed and striéd. There are porcelains and lamps of papier-mâché and glass beads, and a chair and an ottoman fit for an English duchess—if she had money. Everything is seductive beyond measure.

Pied-à-terre indeed, only in an apartment this airy and lovely, it is hard to keep your *pieds* on the *terre*. □

WATERFRONT PHOENIX

continued from page 220

one of the few architectural elements spared by the fire—a long hall opens onto the double-height master bedroom. There, a nineteenth-century Portuguese four-poster sits below a tower formed by dark, curved wood trusses. "The trusses create a middle to the room," Shope says. "But if you stand at the bed, they carry your eye out to Long Island Sound and all the way to Huntington."

"We wanted a little bit of that castle feeling," says Ertegun. "We put the bed in the center so that they could see the water." Like a lighthouse or a storybook tower, the space has the romance of a hideaway under the eaves and the luxury of a sumptuous throne room. The walls, bed, chairs and a chaise are covered with a blue-and-white toile de Jouy. "It makes the room cozier," says Ertegun. "The whole house is like a ship," Duffy says. "Downstairs there are pale yellows and earth tones that reflect the rocks; then, as you go upstairs, you see the sea, and everything becomes the color of sky and water."

> "Downstairs there are earth tones that reflect the rocks; upstairs everything becomes the color of sky and water."

On the third floor, the house follows the roofline, giving the children's bedrooms the feel of secret places, with window seats and slanted ceilings. "We designed this area from the outside in," says Wharton. "There are wonderful nooks and crannies—as the house unfolds, it becomes very unpredictable." The rooms are furnished with the wife's collection of antique white wicker, lovingly restored after the fire.

"The best part now is sitting in the living room after work," the husband says. Ensconced on the daybed, he can watch the small screen, while outside on the Big Screen, the water turns deep gold in the evening light, proof that a man's castle can indeed become his home. □

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29 • Scottsdale, Arizona. Discover this land of breathtaking color, alive with desert beauty and an abundance of Southwestern hospitality and sunshine! Call the Scottsdale Convention & Visitors Bureau at (800) 877-1117.

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37 • Caldwell Snyder Gallery. Contemporary original paintings, sculpture and limited edition works by international artists including Thomas Pradzynski, Manel Anoro, Regina Saura, Maria Luisa Campoy, Piotr Strelnik. For a catalog, call (415) 296-7896 or (212) 387-0208. $15.

38 • Christie's. Fine art and antique auctioneers. Viewings and sales are free and open to the public. To find out what is currently on view, please call (212) 546-1000. For catalogs or subscription information, please call (800) 395-6300.

39 • Collectors Editions. Representing many of America's most popular artists including Hessam, Sabzi, Oleg and Pino. For pricing information or a free color brochure, call (800) 736-0001.

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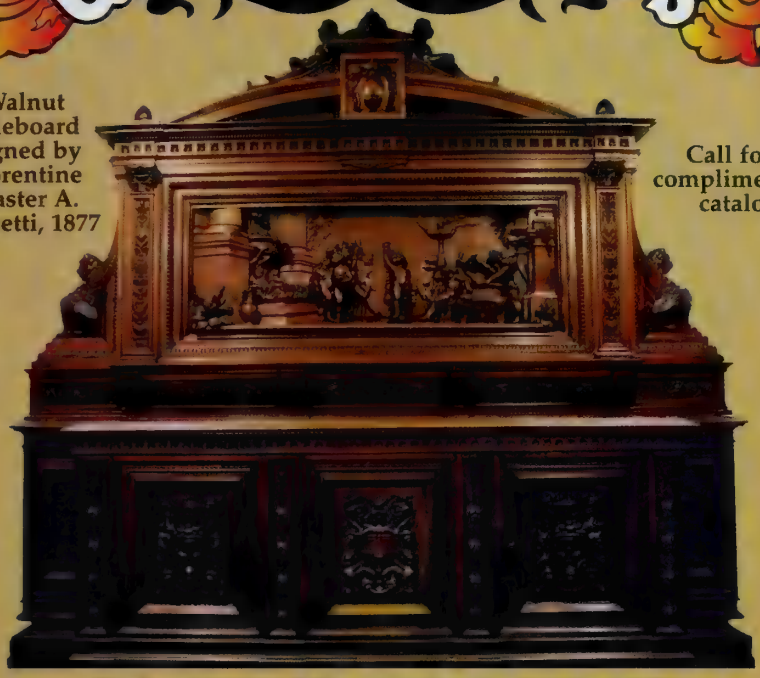
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priceless tilework of a more recent era—a set of panels by Louis Comfort Tiffany. "I'm not a Tiffany lamp man, but I love his architectural detailing," Loring admits. "The rope molding on the fireplace is a Tiffany motif too. For his ceiling fixtures, he sometimes used string or rope plaster piped through pastry tubes and painted with gold radiator paint—humble material, grand effect. These glass panels, a couple of which once hung in the windows of the Tiffany studios, have the opulence of Baroque jewels. I had originally covered the walls behind them with a mosaic of colored and embossed rice paper, but it wasn't substantial enough, so—to the horror of my workmen—I ripped it out. One can't fall in love with all one's little mud pies. We ultimately used a background of Venetian tile. I love everything Venetian or Moroccan: The lavish overlay of textures is, paradoxically, very restful."

Quinn's favorite area is the second-floor parlor and alcove, which was once a kitchen and bath surfaced entirely in white tile. The focal point at one end is a mid-nineteenth-century Jacobean Revival door surround. It frames the center section of a curio cabinet hung with an antique silk brocade woven in Lyons for a Moroccan palace. The objects it displays are the trophies of a grand tour that Loring embarked upon as a teenager and has yet to complete: a Venetian Mannerist engraving (his hour in Asolo); a terra-cotta lion's head from the thirteenth century (his first acquisition as an art student in Paris); an ostrich egg on an Arab chain that once hung in the cave of the Nativity in Bethlehem; and a sterling silver box designed by Loring for Tiffany's.

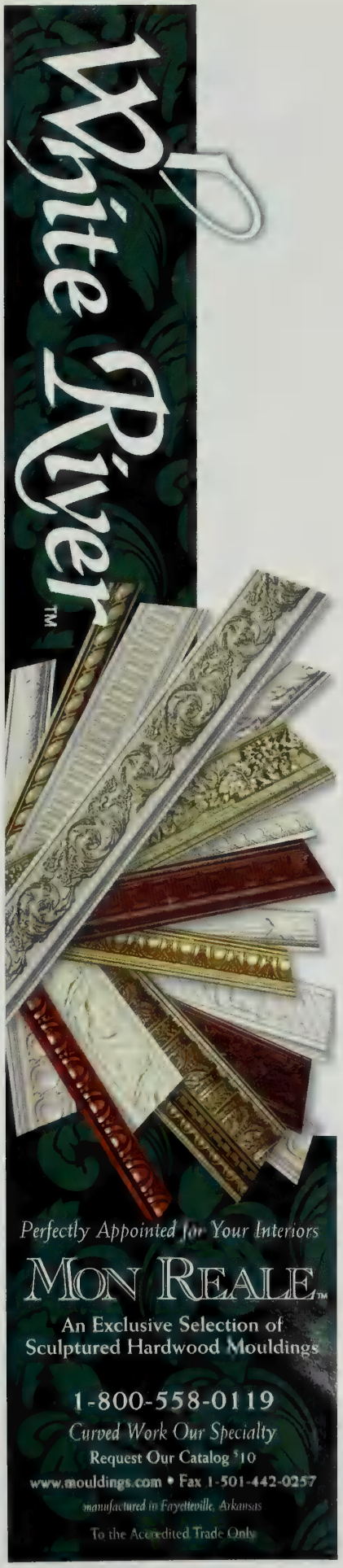
The parlor is dominated by an Irish gilt sofa, behind which hangs a Swiss poster by Viktor Rutz, a hand-lithographed advertisement for Gruyère cheese from the 1930s. Loring likes such startling juxtapositions of the folksy and the aristocratic, and commercial art is, after all, part of his patrimony. "I need a personal reason to buy things," he observes. "Most of my wall space not preempted by posters is devoted to the work of friends."

Quinn preserved what architectural history he could salvage from the old building, though there wasn't much: a fine old door that he had copied and the mosaic-tile floor in the entrance hall. Loring has arranged the second-floor living room, illuminated by a Tiffany fixture, for the kind of intimate entertaining he likes best. Walls and ceilings are painted in persimmon; contemporary Italian chairs are upholstered in white leather; the side tables, inlaid with bone, are antiques from Damascus.

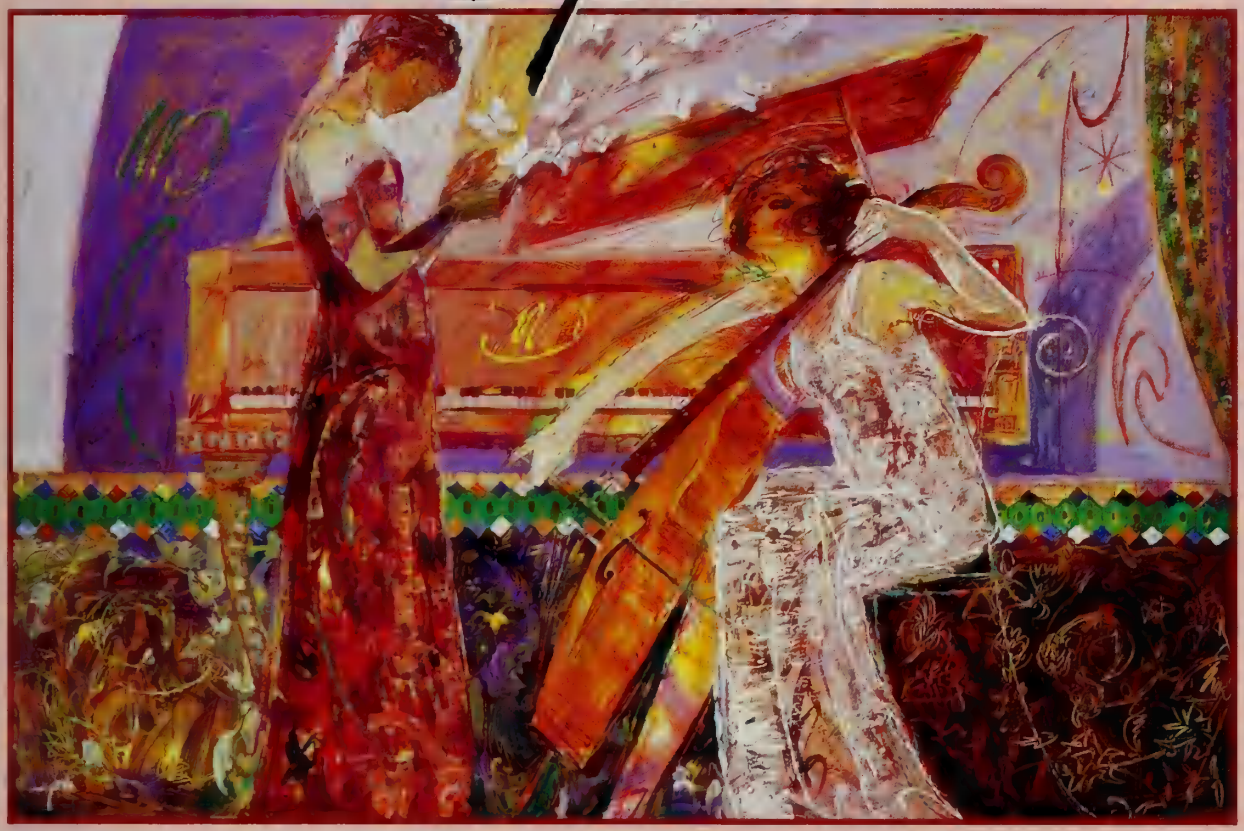
Loring's "is a collaborative life," says Quinn. "His mission is to discover and dispense pleasure." The designer and his family—he has two children—came from London for Thanksgiving and stayed in the "child's" guest bedroom—a glamorously impudent, glossy and playful boîte de nuit that is hung with vintage film posters, including a rare Vargas portrait of Marlene Dietrich. At the top of the house is a larger guest loft, part of which was inspired by Napoleon's library at Malmaison. Quinn raised the ceiling, except in the guest study, where a lowered single coffer defines the division of sleeping and living areas. It is here that office furniture from a catalogue meets choice pieces of Biedermeier, Regency, Wiener Werkstätte, Colonial American and Art Déco.

Loring has his private quarters on the third floor, and in contrast with the voluptuous color, exoticism and subtle opulence everywhere else, they are sober, even rather monkish. "Midway through the renovation," says Quinn, "Jack began to panic. The house was still a hellhole, and he missed his books and his doorman. He needed the security of the familiar, and that was the cerebral gray atmosphere of Fifth Avenue. So we surrounded him with the furnishings from his uptown apartment."

Can a restless acquisitor of beauty—an aesthetic corsair like John Loring—ever truly be settled? He seems to think so. "In putting this house together," he reflects, "I often thought of Queen Victoria's favorite daughter, Princess Vicky, who, as the dowager empress of Germany, abandoned the halls of power and built herself a graceful little country palace filled with her treasures. When anyone remarked on its distance from court or the absence of royal pomp, she was ready with her motto, 'Everything to please, nothing to impress.'" □



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"During the day it's voluptuous and full of color," Cottrell says. "At night, with the light, it's warmer and more glowing, and the feeling becomes more important than the furnishings.

"The furniture isn't ornate, except for the Venetian-style low tables," he adds. "What *is* ornate is the room. I kept the furniture as the softening agent. I could have done leggy Italian furniture, but I wanted the room to be comfortable. I did big sofas with tufted seats and pillows with fringe to make it more luxurious. It's such a large room, I wanted the furniture and the rug to be anchors."

Personal touches are numerous but inconspicuous. On the dining room ceiling, each coffer is dotted with the carved and gilded faces of the house's owners, plus their cat, Lily, and late dog. (Elsewhere, there is a mural of Lily stalking a bird.) "We wanted to have fun, do some silly things," Jim Zaleski says. Carl Bryant, who had worked for Sorrell but now has his own practice, collaborated with Wenner on many of the more elaborate architectural details.

The tortoise-and-cream burlwood wainscoting on the dining room walls is accented by a sky-colored silk on the chairs. Draperies are made from the same rose silk that covers the walls. "I used that damask in all three rooms," says Cottrell. "In my opinion, the simplicity of the color lets everything else be important. If I had brought in patterns, it could have been a disaster. The draperies really neutralized the room, creating a comfortable balance and background. It warms it, so that details like mantels and moldings don't fly away."

The music room, with its Steinway grand piano and jewel-colored fabrics, is Jim Zaleski's favorite. Wenner painted the recessed ceiling panels with angels holding lyres, horns and other instruments. The dark wood cabinet's heavily carved folding doors have an unusual origin. After the Northridge earthquake, the Zaleskis visited a friend whose penthouse was all but destroyed. He sold them the doors to what had once been his dining room, and the cabinet they now adorn was one of the music room's first furnishings.

Each of the three major, connected [illegible] offers its own atmosphere but is [illegible] others in some way," says Cottrell. "The music room has burgundy velvets and fiery tones but is also linked to the pink shades of the living and dining rooms." Identical chandeliers of Murano glass link them further still.

The Zaleskis, who have been married twenty-nine years, had dreamed about this house for a long time. Twenty-two years ago they saw a magazine article that featured a bed owned by the late designer Michael Taylor, which had twisted, gilded columns supporting a canopy. They liked the bed so much that they saved the photograph—and were astonished when Cottrell suggested the same one for the master suite. "I've always loved that bed too," says Cottrell, "so we had it copied." Beverly Zaleski chose the seafoam-green silk hangings.

The formal, terraced gardens were conceived by Santa Barbara–based landscape architect Sandy Devine. They were planted with five hundred rosebushes and eleven mature olive trees specially selected for their twisted trunks. Stone fountains double as spas. Following gravel walkways, passing under a vine-covered pergola, one arrives at ninety-six stone steps bisected by the clamshell fountain and lined with potted citrus trees. "You can't see everything at once," Jim Zaleski points out. "You see each little bit as you walk around."

The sixty-five-foot pool, inspired by one at San Simeon, features a compass at the bottom and a Greek-key tile border around its deep section. Beverly Zaleski relied on her engineer husband for the design. "I don't swim," she explains, "so Jim put the deep part of the pool in the center and surrounded it with shallow water so that I can play around the edges." The poolhouse, modeled after another Palladian villa, sits in perfect harmony with its giant neighbor up the many-stepped hill. The vanilla-and-mint-green interior was designed by Cottrell.

"Jim challenged me to produce what he wanted," Cottrell says of Villa Zefiro. "The result is pretty phenomenal. It reminds me of a house the Vanderbilts would have done. To me, it's not just a house, it's a unique piece of art. Although it's the collaboration of different people, there's a rhythm, a thought, that goes through it, so it all ties together. It's a total picture." □

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ventional lake house," she says. "I had comfort and glamour in mind."

The Gordons installed limestone floors in the great room and the pantry, which may evoke images of Italian villas, but they are also impervious to gravel and mud if you're walking in the rooms after a swim. Because a lot of Ellery Gordon's business is done in India, she went with him on one of his trips and ordered specially woven taffetas and silks to use for bed hangings and upholsteries. "You don't expect that in a little cottage," she says. The bed in the master bedroom, for example, is a four-poster topped by a gilt coronet and wreathed in apple-green taffeta. It is positioned so that the first view on waking up is through the trees to the lake and shore beyond.

The couple haunted New York–area sources for objects for the house. "We did our dance in the auction houses," reports Reed Gordon. She also traversed the countryside. At Brimfield, the famous Massachusetts open-air market, she found a gilt overmantel mirror from Maine; and at another market, Farmington, she discovered a fire surround to go with it.

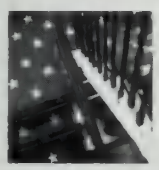
> "We wanted to open the house up inside and open it to the lake," says Gordon.

With all of the changes, major and minor, "we've made a cottage with classical references," says Gordon. "People say, 'It's like Maine,' or 'It's like the Lago di Garda'; and that means that it's successful, because everyone can bring their own fantasy to it."

For Gordon, there is the tremendous sense of well-being that comes from the experience of the house in relationship to the woods and the lake. "The Japanese have a term, 'the borrowed view.' I feel that's what we have with all of the subtle and glorious shifts of mood and scenery that we're part of. This retreat is totally dedicated to quiet pursuits: fishing, gardening, kayaking and canoeing. There are no powerboats on the lake and no roads leading directly to it."

These two busy people thought they were just designing a getaway for summer weekends, when, as every savvy New Yorker knows, "nobody's in town." Instead, "we start talking about going there on Thursday morning all year round," says Marjorie Reed Gordon. "In the autumn the leaves are spectacular, and in the winter, with snow on the hillsides and ice on the lake, the whole scene is breathtaking."

"We have to have it," Ellery Gordon adds simply. "It's instant peace." □

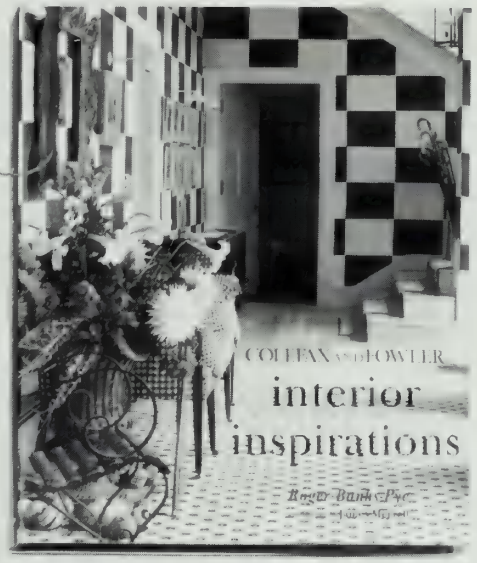


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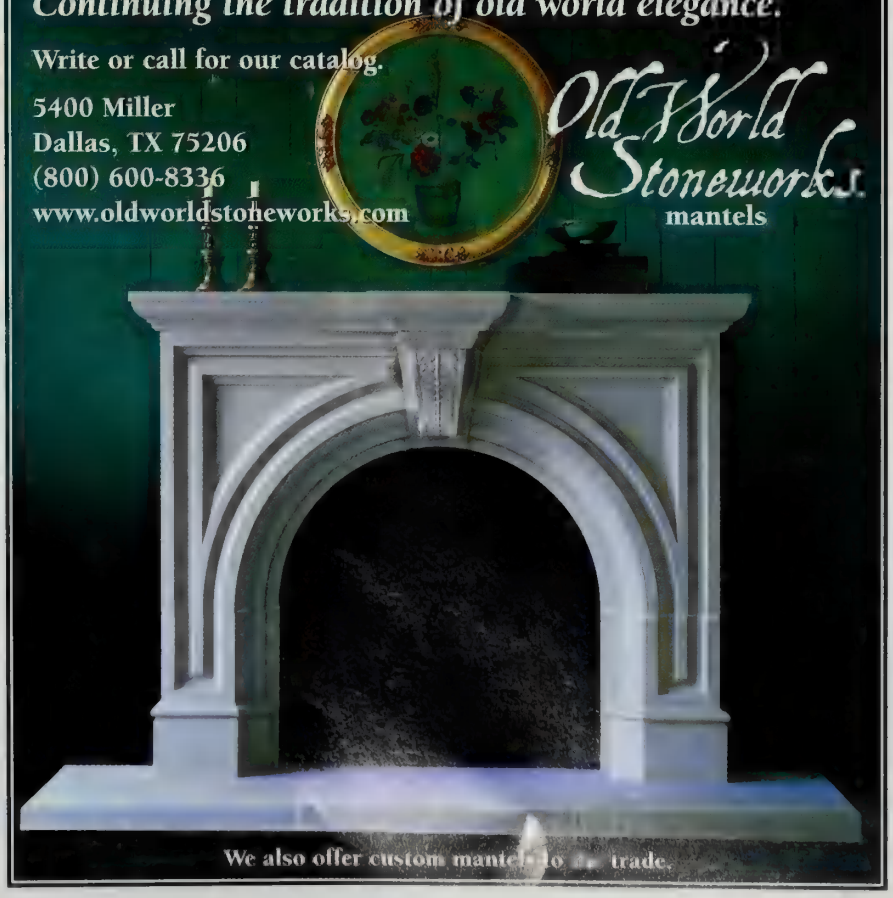
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lution is the sliding damask-covered panels that conceal added shelves behind the antique maple bed in the guest bedroom.

The kitchen underwent the most dramatic alteration. It was completely gutted and outfitted with cherrywood cabinets and spiral-shaped wrought iron hardware, granite countertops and a fern-green Brazilian marble floor inlaid with semiprecious stones.

Lighting was also an important consideration. "One of our first tasks was to remove the large incandescent downlights that made the rooms look like offices," says Botero. "We rewired everything and installed dimmable, low-voltage recessed lights that create an intimate feeling. Small spotlights were suspended above the art."

The Tibetan pieces were also the springboard for the dragon motif on the stair runner, which Botero describes as the design backbone of the entire residence. Indeed, dragons, phoenixes, waves and scrolls turn up everywhere, from the newel, on which an antique bronze dragon is mounted, to a tabletop designed by Botero for the family room and inlaid with malachite, azurite and onyx.

Outside, New York landscape designer Janice Parker created the first-floor patio off the family room, three terraces

> "The design reflects the motifs found within the Tibetan art," says Botero.

and a roof garden. "The objective was to create a continuity between the interior and exterior spaces," says Parker. "Each terrace is color-coded to the related rooms and has its own mood and microenvironment. I also wanted to keep a connection with Sam's preference for strong hues."

"I was given a lot of creative freedom, which added a sense of surprise, lightness and humor to the interior," notes Samuel Botero. "The result was a very unusual, adventurous house. I love color, but few people have the courage to use it as we did here." □

continued from page 234

vidual sheets of white-gold leaf. Equal attention was given to the radial-herringbone-patterned floor; inlaid with ebony at the perimeter, it culminates in a star shape at its center. "The room is magical at night," the client says.

The cove lighting devised by Skurman combines with an ornate, Louis XV–style chandelier to create illumination as subtle as starlight. (An electric pulley system allows easy access to the fixture's two dozen candles.) Thanks to copious amounts of gilt—on the base of the Italian Baroque consoles, on the arms and legs of the contemporary chairs—the entire room seems to glow.

The most dramatic structural alterations took place in the master suite, which Skurman and Tucker turned on its head, designwise, to arrive at a more logical flow. "One of the problems was that first you entered the dressing room, then the bath, then the master bedroom," Skurman says. "It wasn't a good sequence. We were able to change that to a much better-functioning order." Now one moves from bedroom to dressing area to bath. Tucker and Skurman also reconfigured an oddly shaped guest bedroom—"It was a bowling alley," Tucker says—into a sitting room and bedroom.

> "It's okay with me if you kick off your shoes and put your feet up on the low table. It's okay to eat pizza in the sitting room."

In both bedroom suites, the resulting view that opens from one room to another amply demonstrates Skurman's theory that "when Neoclassical work is done well, it just sits right; it doesn't grab your attention."

There's a sense of inevitability about the place, as though it has finally arrived where it was always meant to be. "It was a hodgepodge between English and French," says Skurman. "Now it looks like a great old French apartment." □

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TO *the* TRADE

IN THE SHOWROOMS

● J. Robert Scott

"I had wanted to have a location in Europe for years," says **Sally Sirkin Lewis**, chairman of J. Robert Scott, who crowns her nearly 40-year career as an interior designer and creator of furniture and fabrics with a large showroom in London's Chelsea Harbour Design Center (44-171-376-4705). "I wanted to go where people couldn't identify us immediately," says Lewis, who nonetheless garnered 450 people for the opening party.

Lewis is already well known among some English designers, such as **Kelly Hoppen**, who says, "Textures appeal to me more than patterns, and J. Robert Scott's chenilles, wools and silks are fabrics you want to touch." **Nicholas Haslam** remarks, "The range of colors is exquisite—pewters, golds, bronzes and rain-cloud grays." Lewis is showing all of her fabric collections in London, including her latest group of silks, called Marco Polo. She was selective with the furniture she sent, however: "I didn't want anything that was too strongly Art Déco or that looked like too precise a reproduction." Among the pieces that made the voyage were the soft, tub-shaped Romeo and Juliet chairs; the Snail console, a silver table with a pair of curls on the apron; and the French Line Tête-à-Tête, a three-seat butter leather sofa with a square opening in the back, where a third person may sit facing the opposite direction of the two people at either end.



JONATHAN PILKINGTON

Sally Sirkin Lewis at her new showroom in London

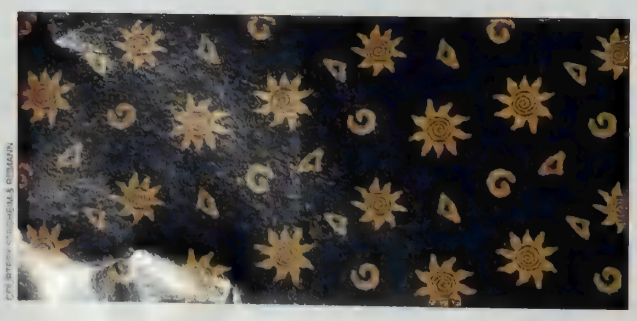
J. Robert Scott's French Line Tête-à-Tête, below, in butter leather



COURTESY J. ROBERT SCOTT

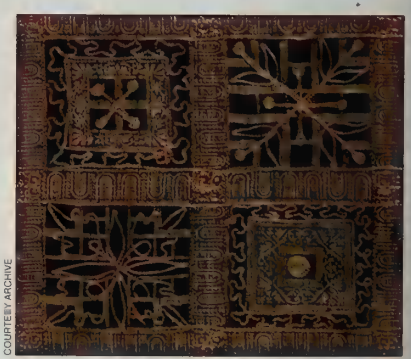
● Stroheim & Romann

From JAB, the parent company of Stroheim & Romann (212/486-1500), there is *Cresta*, created by the French couture house of Louis Feraud. The woven design (right) shows images of the sun and curlicues and triangles in gold against a navy-blue background.



● Dakota Jackson

Two new fabrics designed by the Washington-based firm Archive are available at Dakota Jackson in Los Angeles (310/659-7424) and Ruth Caplan in New York (212/826-3756). Archive, whose crepes, silk organzas, hand-painted fabrics and other materials usually are associated with the fashion industry, has introduced *Parasol* and *Verona*, which have sections that have been burned out and then hand-embroidered. **Craig Wright** is particularly fond of *Parasol*, which has various string-embroidered patterns contained in squares. *Verona* is a damask design on a sheer background.



COURTESY ARCHIVE

Archive's new fabrics *Parasol*, above, and *Verona*



COURTESY ARCHIVE

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ANTHONY CUNHA

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Candia Lutyens and Paul Peterson have made much use of **John Boyd Textiles**' archives for their reissues of Sir Edwin Lutyens's furniture (*AD*, Jan. 1996). The English firm has been producing horsehair fabrics since 1837 using the same looms and techniques. "Historically, horsehair was used in servants' quarters because of its durability," says Anna Smith, the company's managing director, "but Chippendale and Hepplewhite put it in the parlor." John Boyd has many old patterns, dating as far back as a 1750s black strié called *Noriker*, a Mackintosh favorite. Scalamandré, Lee Jofa, Schumacher and Brunschwig sell the fabrics (above). John Boyd Textiles, Higher Flax Mills, Castle Cary, Somerset BA7 7DY; 44-1963-350-451.

CHICAGO WOOD IMPRESARIO

"There's no one else in the United States and very few people in Europe today who can do the work **Birger Juell** is doing," says **Stanley Falconer**, senior interior designer for the London firm of Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler. Falconer has done several interiors for a Chicago client (*AD*, Aug. 1998), and he discovered Juell's handcrafted wood floors (below) on one of his first trips to Illinois. Juell, whose short career as a sailor installing wood decks on ships brought him to the United States from his native Norway, has been making flooring for more than 50 years.

Among the types of flooring Juell crafts is *parquet de Versailles*. Looking almost like basket weave, it's made from quarter-sawn oak that is hand-scraped, hand-beveled, rubbed with acid to attain depth and patina, oil-stained three times, waxed and buffed. "We recycle antique barn beams by slicing through the beam as though it were a loaf of bread," Juell says, "and we make flooring patterns with the blocks." He calls the smaller block patterns by the name he has trademarked, Cobblewood, and the patterns of larger wood chunks Cobbleblock. Birger Juell, Ltd., 1337 Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654; 312/464-9663.



COURTESY BIRGER JUELL



COURTESY ALEXANDER VON EIKH

THE EXTRAVAGANCE OF METAL

Alexander von Eikh arrived in New York from his native Russia 27 years ago. After taking classes at both the Parsons School of Design and Cooper Union, he was "confused about whether to be a painter or a fabricator." A meeting with **Thomas Britt** gave him the chance to be both, as the New York designer asked him to paint and fabricate custom pieces, such as the wrought iron chandeliers for Britt's Long Island guesthouse (*AD*, Sept. 1997). Now, after having been a textile designer in Milan and a custom furniture maker in California, von Eikh is back in New York with his first collection of metal pieces (left). The steel tables, chairs and etageres represent a variety of styles, including classic forms and a sort of surreal modernism. "I've done minimalist designs," he says, "but I find satisfaction in extravagant creations. The fact that these pieces are handmade gives them interesting details. No piece is ever the same as another. And then, because they're a personal expression, they work with many other styles." Alexander von Eikh, 212/388-8089.

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TO *the* TRADE

FLOWER POWER

Boussac of France, which on January 1 became **Boussac Fadini** to reflect its purchase of the long-established Italian textile firm Fadini Borghi, has already sold out of its new book of wallpapers, which designers from **Juan Pablo Molyneux** to **Penny Drue Baird** snapped up right away. "It has done phenomenally well in the United States, the United Kingdom and the Scandinavian countries—particularly the botanicals," says Boussac's Niel De Marino. Drawing on the company's reservoir of printed cotton fabrics, the book, now in its second printing, offers 21 superbly drafted wallpapers and borders, several of which look like studies of flora on a white background. *Fontenay* (above) has an oversize image of a leafy hibiscus stalk rendered in meticulous detail; *Bananier* is a densely printed pattern of palm fronds and green banana bunches; and *Jamaica* (left) shows an almost surrealistic arrangement of tropical leaves, coral and shells in baskets and a chinoiserie birdcage floating on a beige ground. Boussac Fadini, 979 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022; 212/421-0534.



COURTESY BOUSSAC FADINI



COURTESY BOUSSAC FADINI

BLIND LOYALTY

The installers for these custom blinds cover their shoes when they come into an interior I'm working on. That's how meticulous they are," **Renny Saltzman** says of the firm **Window Architecture**. The more important part of the job, which pleases designers **Robert Bray**, **Thad Hayes** and **Harry Schnaper**, is the creation of all kinds of window coverings. "We make everything from wood venetian blinds and solar screen shades to shutters in raised-panel, Georgian and plantation styles," says Howard Davis, third-generation director of the firm.

Window Architecture's venetian blinds are made of cedar, which has the right grain to support a slat that may need to be 12 feet long but only a quarter-inch thick. Saltzman notes that because the Virginia-based company, which has an office in Manhattan, offers a range of stains and colors for blinds and tapes, he rarely has to send paint chips and order a custom color. Window Architecture, 810 Confederacy Dr., Penn Laird, VA 22846; 540/574-0906.

SOLID EXPERIENCE

In his 25 years as a furniture maker, **Peter Maynard** has built quite a following, from designer **Bruce Gregga**, who ordered a pair of folding card tables, to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where the expert craftsman created the Asian-inspired benches for the new Chinese wing. "We've made anything and everything, as long as quality was an issue," says Maynard. He can work in the style of 18th-century marquetry or of Frank Lloyd Wright as well as design new pieces with subtle historical references.



COURTESY MAYNARD & MAYNARD FURNITUREMAKERS

Maynard, whose shop is in New Hampshire, also collects and dries local woods; he once made a carved secretary out of a single log. Another unique project was a Chinese rosewood table with a latticed skirt, which required extensive research on Asian furniture, 200 joints and four months of labor. "Some pieces go beyond what a human should do in this day and age," he says. Maynard & Maynard Furnituremakers, Beryl Mountain Rd., HC63, Box 141, South Acworth, NH 03607; 603/835-2969. □

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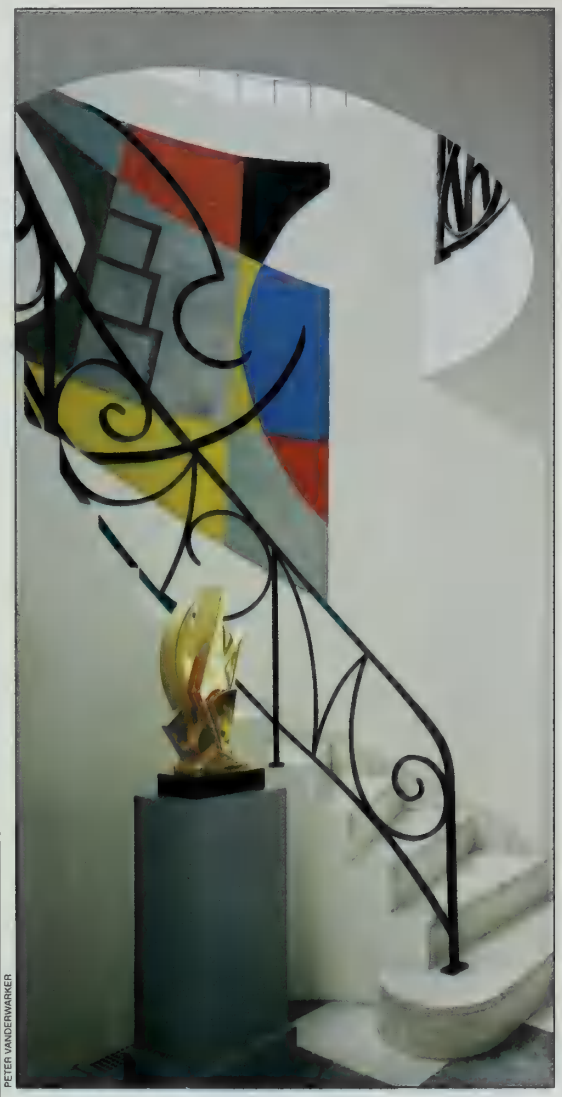


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The entrance hall of the Frelinghuysen Morris house in Massachusetts. See page 48.

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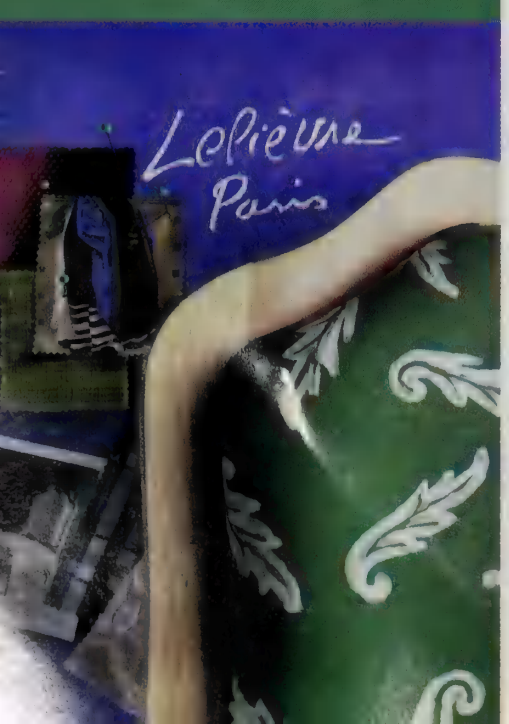


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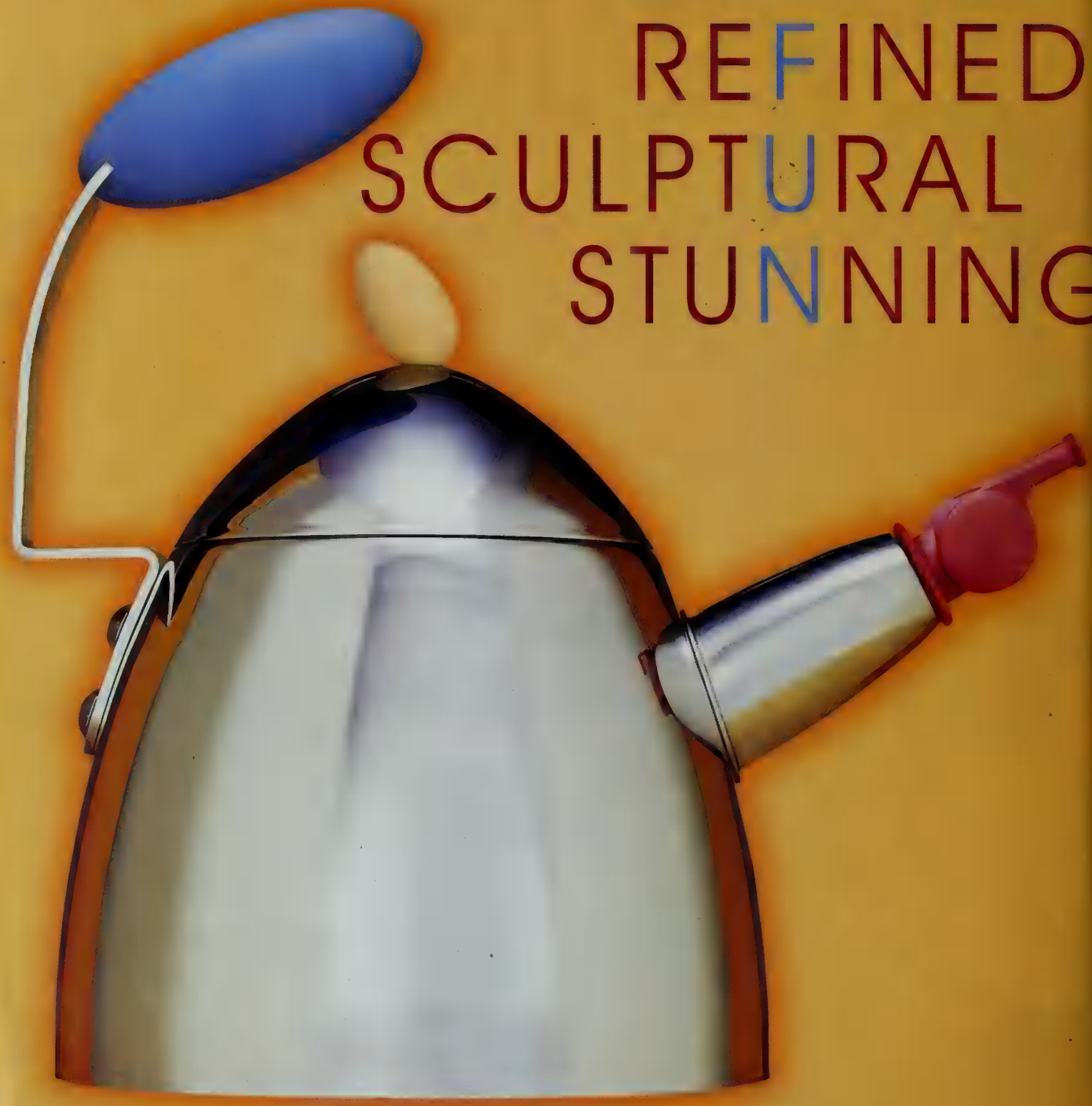
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PET: Vilandry Peach/Green, FURNITURE & FABRIC: M.B.S. sofa with Dover Damask Cream, M.B.C. chair with Balbianello Green,
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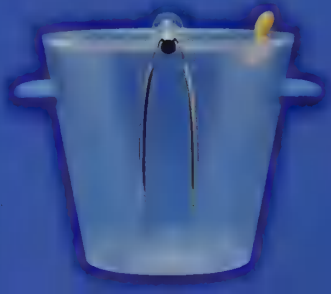
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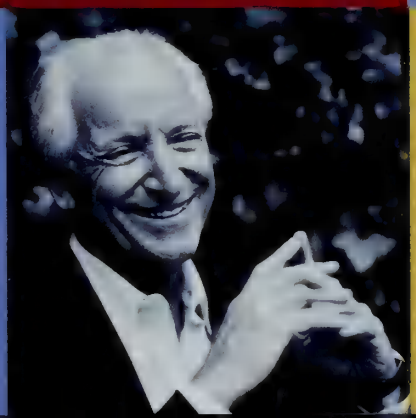
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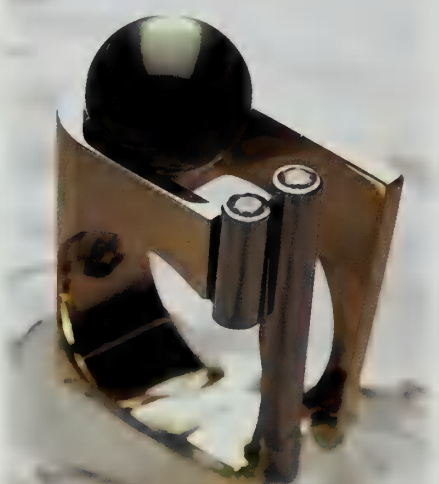
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"GIVERNY DOES NOT LIVE FOR TOURISTS OR GARDEN CRITICS BUT FOR ARTISTS."

As a stay-at-home mom with two children in preschool, I inhabit a world quite different from my relatively self-indulgent days of earning a master's degree in architecture. After the kids are in bed, I like to curl up on the sofa with the latest issue of *Architectural Digest*. Articles like "Architecture: Rem Koolhaas in Bordeaux" (October 1998) refuel my passion. As long as you continue to publish such fine examples of artful and inventive responses to very real and often mundane needs, my subscription, as well as my perspective, will be infinitely renewed.

SHERI ERCOLANO
SCOTTS VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

I have been visiting Giverny ("Gardens: Looking at Giverny," November 1998) for the past forty years and have painted there for the last ten years. It seems that writer Jamaica Kincaid visited Giverny at the wrong time of year; I never noticed that the wisteria trunk had rotted! Nor do I think the garden died with Monet. Though it is true that "*tout passe et tout passe*," Giverny does not live for tourists or garden critics but for the enjoyment of young artists.

FRANÇOISE DUBRULLE
TACOMA, WASHINGTON

The San Diego Historical Society thanks you for the splendid photographs of the Marston House ("Historic Houses: Irving Gill's Marston House," November). *Architectural Digest* successfully captured the residence as well as the essence of the Craftsman movement. The restoration was executed by the generous service of our members, and we would like to acknowledge our volunteers who produced an environment worthy of your attention.

THERESE T. WHITCOMB
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

I found the article "Manhattan Nocturne" in your November issue spellbinding. The imaginative and creative approach by interior designers Robert Bray and Michael Schaible blends well with the imaginary landscape. I viewed this as an inviting fantasy-filled interior offering warmth and ambience.

RICHARD DE MESA, JR.
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

What an absolute delight to see the article on Brenthurst in Johannesburg ("Gardens: The Flower of South Africa," November). We have many wonderful residences here, so please, let's see some more.

JANET LONDAL
JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

"Off the Air with Robin Quivers" (December 1998) was absolutely and surprisingly delightful—a complete defiance of the obvious. Ms. Quivers and interior designer Joy Mazur collaborated to produce an exquisite interior full of historical elegance, with plush, regal results. My sincerest congratulations!

JOYCE NATCH
HOUSTON, TEXAS

I'm afraid my former favorite magazine has hit an all-time low. I'm speaking of your feature on Robin Quivers and her over-the-top apartment. How sad for your otherwise excellent publication.

DEBBIE MEEKER
COTO DE CAZA, CALIFORNIA

Since I collect Asian antiques, which are displayed in my Asian-influenced home, the December issue was especially interesting to me. I particularly enjoyed the stories about Kyushu's Sanso Murata Inn ("Hotels: Rustic Luxury in Japan"), Moere-Numa Park ("Noguchi's Last Gift") and Ming and Qing pieces ("Antiques: Chinese Classical Furniture"). Please continue to feature elegant Asian rooms where less is more. Thank you for making my life more beautiful.

JOYCE M. ENGLERT
BILLINGS, MONTANA

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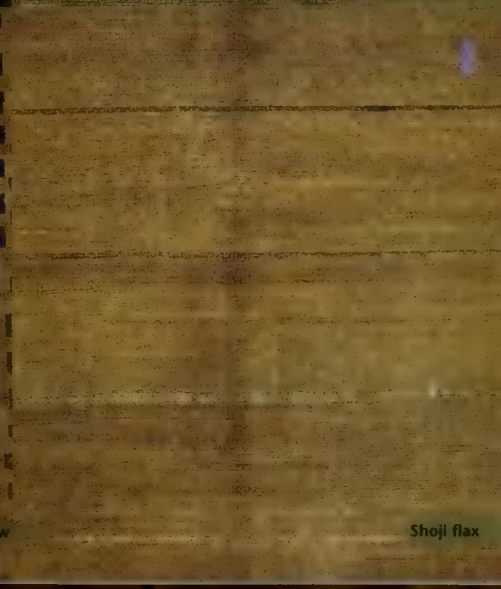
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KENNETH NOLAND

Next month's special issue represents the most massive editing project we've undertaken. We've sifted through every photograph ever published in Architectural Digest to assemble a vibrant visual record of the interior design, architecture, art, antiques and personalities that have defined the twentieth century. It's a remarkable collection of images, from Le Corbusier to Elsie de Wolfe to Marlene Dietrich, Pablo Picasso to Gustav Stickley to Mark Hampton, Dorothy Draper to Roy Lichtenstein to Ralph Lauren. The issue also highlights the century's most noted style leaders, collectors and artists, all of whom appeared in Architectural Digest. Some of the century's best writers have also contributed to our pages, including Gore Vidal, M. F. K. Fisher, John Updike, James Baldwin, William Styron, Maya Angelou and Kurt Vonnegut, and excerpts from their pieces amount to a stirring chorus of twentieth-century literary voices. More than a retrospective, however, the April issue offers a glimpse of the talent and promise of the next millennium. And the painting on the cover of this month's issue? The artist happens to be one of my favorites (he's also my husband).

Paige Rense
Editor-in-Chief


ELLEN KAHN

Ann E. Berman is a freelance writer who specializes in the arts.

Avis Berman is editing an updated version of *The Artist's Voice: Talks with Seventeen Modern Artists* by Katharine Kuh (1962), to be published by Da Capo Press this fall.

Nancy Collins, an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer, has been a correspondent for ABC News and is a feature writer for *Rolling Stone* and *Us*. She is the author of a memoir collection, *Hard to Get*.

Michael Frank is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer. His short stories, essays and articles have appeared in *Antaeus*, *The Southwest Review* and *The New York Times*.

Paul Goldberger, an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer, is a Pulitzer Prize–winning architecture critic.

Elizabeth Lambert is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer who lives in London.

Aileen Mehle is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer and the author of the "Suzy" column for *W* and *Women's Wear Daily*.

Prince Michael of Greece is the author of *The Crown Jewels of Europe*, *Imperial Palaces of Russia*, *Nicholas and Alexandra: The Family Albums* and *La Bouboulina. Living with Ghosts* is his latest book.

Neil Sheehan is an author and journalist. His book, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam*, won a National Book Award and the 1989 Pulitzer Prize in nonfiction.

Susan Sheehan, an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer, teaches nonfiction writing at Georgetown University.

Nicholas Shrady lives in Barcelona and writes for several publications. His book *Sacred Roads: Adventures from the Pilgrimage Trail* will be published in April by HarperCollins.

Jeffrey Simpson, an *Architectural Digest* contributing editor, recently completed *Chautauqua: An American Utopia* for Harry N. Abrams, to be published this spring.

Judith Thurman is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer and the author of *Isak Dinesen: The Life of a Storyteller*, which won a National Book Award. She is finishing *Secrets of the Flesh: A Life of Colette* for Knopf.


MICHAEL MORAN

Suzanne Trocme writes frequently about design and architecture. Her book *Influential Interiors* will be published by Clarkson Potter this summer.

Nicholas von Hoffman is an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer. Among his many books are *Make-Believe Presidents*, *Capitalist Fools* and *Citizen Cohn*.

William Weaver, an *Architectural Digest* contributing writer, won PEN translation awards for *The Name of the Rose* and *Foucault's Pendulum* by Umberto Eco. His book *A Legacy of Excellence: The Story of Villa I Tatti* was published in 1997 by Harry N. Abrams.

Cynthia Zarin is a poet and critic. Her most recent book for children, *What Do You See When You Shut Your Eyes?* was published last September by Houghton Mifflin.



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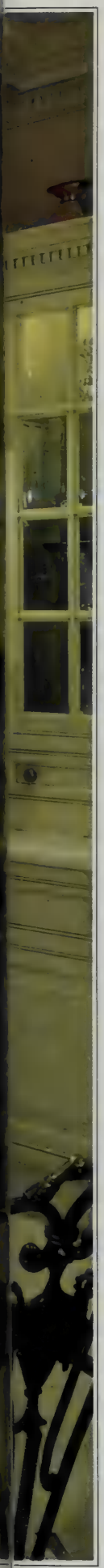
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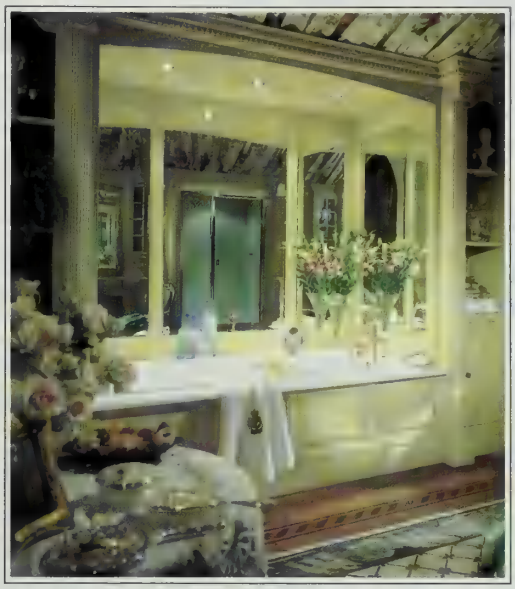
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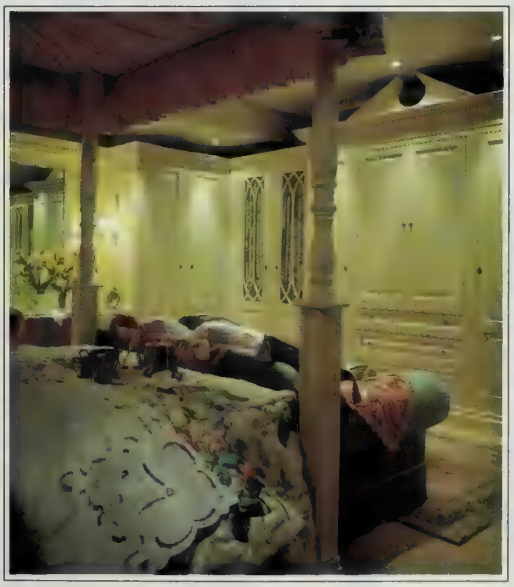
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We wanted a modern space because our things are different from what's out there," **Ron Mann** says of the San Francisco shop (above) he opened with his wife, Louise La Palme Mann, who designs and makes hand-printed and appliquéd fabrics. Mann had had a shop before and wanted to be in the city again. He chanced upon a facility with a big display window and cinder block and cement walls inside. Mann poured a cement floor and rubbed it with bronze paint—and he had **HOM—House of Mann**. With his wife's linen, hemp and cotton fabrics draped like scarves over hooks on freestanding blocks, Mann's furniture creations and found objects take up most of the airy space. Fans of Mann's designs will instantly recognize his high-back Douglas fir dining chairs and his wood-topped Cor-Ten steel table with a rust finish (both above). Add fruit sculptures carved out of lava rock and Mediterranean stone threshers, and the result is what he calls "the Ron Mann look." HOM—House of Mann, 2727 Mariposa, San Francisco, CA 94110; 415/551-9798.

EXPRESSLY ORIENTAL



JOHN LEE

A pair of 18th-century screens at Suzanne Mitchell's gallery

A year ago, when **Suzanne Mitchell** began her venture as a private dealer in Korean and Japanese art, she was well prepared, having just left her post as the head of the Asian division for Sotheby's North America. Her gallery has mostly 17th- and 18th-century paintings, furniture, ceramics and Edo-period screens, such as a pair of four-panel scenes of tigers executed by the artist Okano Toen. By appointment. Suzanne Mitchell Asian Fine Arts, 17 E. 71st St., New York, NY 10021; 212/535-1700.

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GIORGIO ARMANI
CLASSICO

AD at LARGE

HAGAN'S HERO

One of **Victoria Hagan**'s favorite antiques dealers from the country has opened a shop in New York. "**Lou Marotta** does not have a predictable collection," says Hagan (right, at the shop). "I first met him years ago when he had a business in Hudson, and I'm so excited he's come to the city." Marotta, who began dealing in antiques (*AD*, Apr. 1993) after a career as a corporate interior designer, says, "I found, when I started to buy for my shop, that what sold were the things that I bought with my heart."

Among his pet categories are painted surfaces and "things that are a little bit off—not necessarily something that you would laugh about, but maybe smile about." That might include a 1978 limited-edition table by designer John Dickinson that is made of galvanized steel bent to look like a draped tablecloth (left); a Roman carved console table, ca. 1750, with a *faux-marbre* top; and four 1930s Italian bronze chairs, with their original white paint, which have a drapery design and a sun medallion on the back that is reminiscent of Fornasetti. If Marotta does have a bias, it's for French, Italian and Swedish antiques. "I don't like brown furniture," he says. Lou Marotta Inc., 229 E. 60th St., New York, NY 10022; 212/223-0306.



PETER FRIED

GUSTAVIAN GRACE IN STOCKHOLM



PAUL WARCHOL



PAUL WARCHOL

Gustavian-style beds, cabinets, tables and chairs at the Solgården shop in Stockholm

At the Stockholm shop **Solgården**, which means sun farm, the décor is almost entirely white. "We add one accent color each season," says owner **Marianne von Kantzow Ridderstad**. "I used blue recently because I'm fond of the islands in the Swedish archipelago, where I have a house." Ridderstad, who sells Gustavian-style furniture and imported porcelain and glass, is expanding the shop's selection of reproduction chairs, tables, beds and display cabinets (above), and she has started offering more antiques, such as large 18th-century white cupboards. Her contemporary French dinnerware and jugs have clean lines—in keeping with the simplicity of the furniture. Solgården, Karlavägen 58, 114 49 Stockholm; 46-8-663-9360.

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AD at LARGE

PARIS ORIGINAL

To follow in a father's footsteps can be a challenge, especially when the patriarch is Jacques Kugel, but **Nicolas** and **Alexis Kugel** have proven their mettle in the 14 years since they took over the Paris business their father began just after the Second World War. "The place continues to remind me of a magnificent *cabinet de curiosité*," says **Frédéric Méchiche** (right, at the gallery). "Every time I open the door, it's as though I'm entering another world, a grotto full of treasures." Méchiche is drawn to the Kugels' Renaissance objects in the spirit of Oxburg, the carved ivories and the 16th- and 17th-century bronzes. Galerie J. Kugel, 279 rue St.-Honoré, 75008 Paris; 33-1-42-60-86-23.



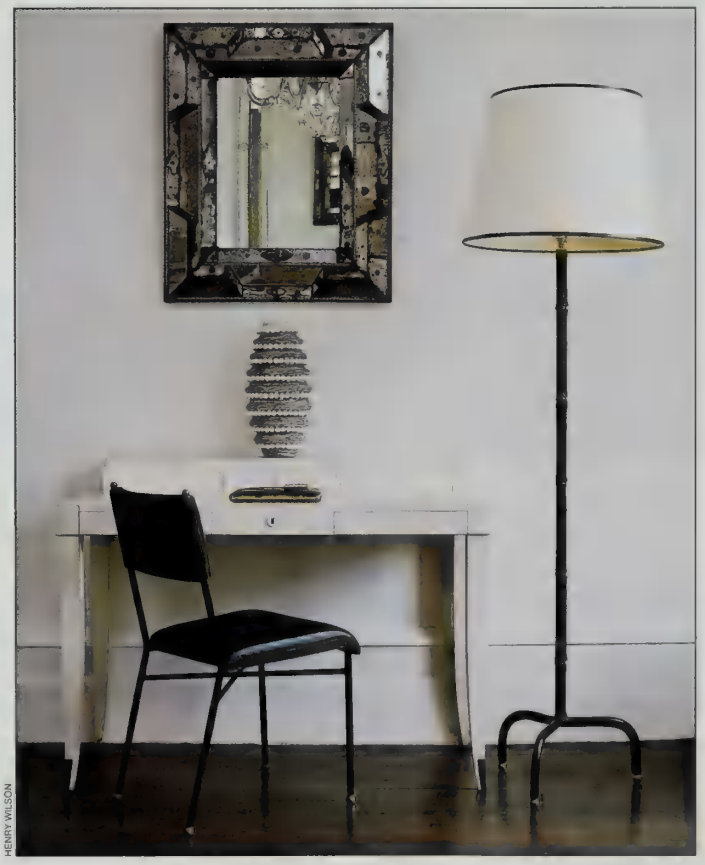
BENEDICTE PETIT



HENRY WILSON



HENRY WILSON



HENRY WILSON

FRENCH HITS IN LONDON

Joining the young dealers in London's Notting Hill is **Jacqueline Toffler Pruskin**, who has assembled a selection of French furniture by the top designers of the first half of the century. Pruskin, who used to own a 20th-century decorative-arts gallery with her former husband and sells to designers such as **Stephen Sills** and **James Huniford**, recently had an exhibit of Jacques Adnet furniture, the first ever in London, and she also shows pieces by Poillerat, Arbus and Jansen. By appointment. Jacqueline Toffler Pruskin, 32 Ledbury Rd., London W11 2AB; 44-171-221-2306.

A 1938 statue and a 1950s iron stand, far left, and an Arbus desk and Adnet lamp and chair, left, at Jacqueline Toffler Pruskin

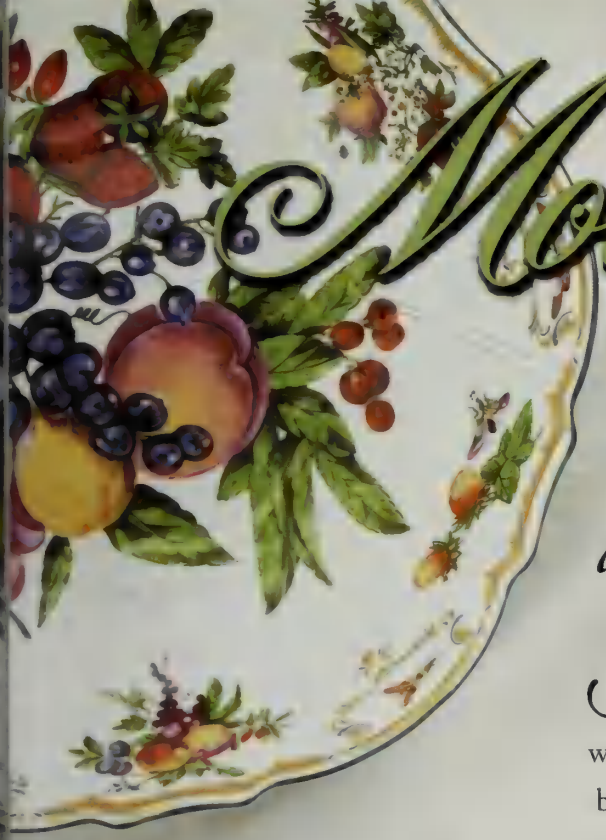
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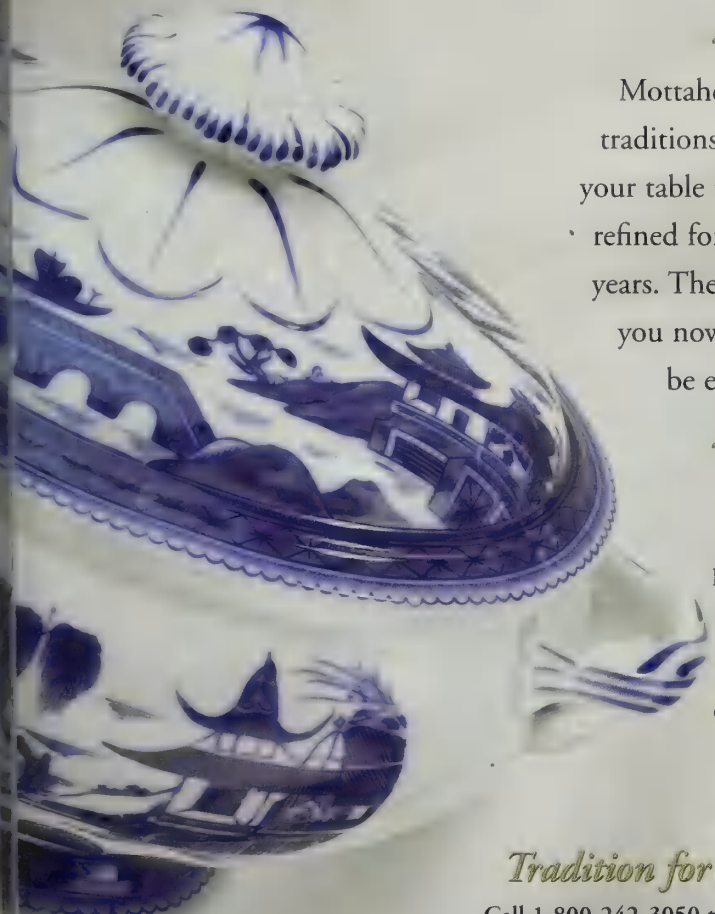
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Blue Canton: *Fashionable tables of the American Colonies were set with this popular blue and white Canton ware. Licensed by the Historic Charleston Foundation.*



Tobacco Leaf: *Tobacco Leaf was one of the most prized Chinese Export patterns c. 1780. Licensed by the Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

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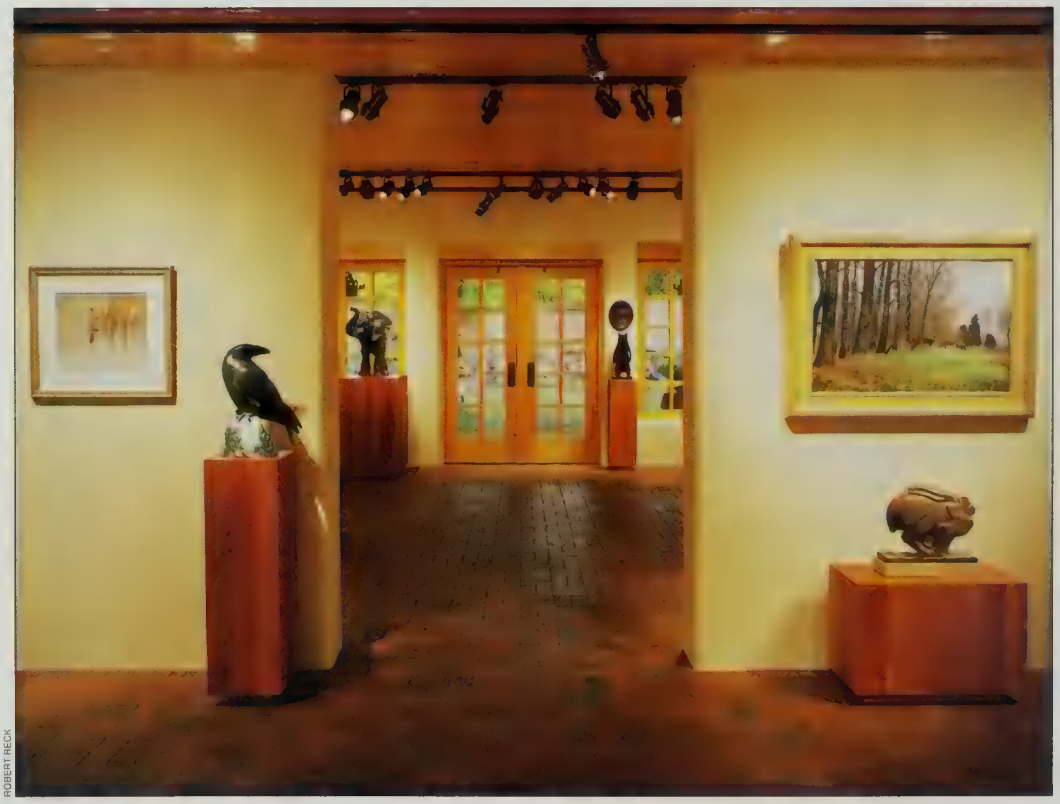
SANTA FE VISTAS

"We're a New York kind of gallery that's been plopped in Santa Fe," **Gerald Peters** says of his new space, which opened last August. The 32,000-square-foot facility, designed by architect Steven Robinson, was conceived as a rambling, Pueblo-style complex that could accommodate several shows at the same time.

"We wanted a variety of spaces to show different works," says Peters, who has been dealing in fine art for more than 25 years and now has a significant Georgia O'Keeffe collection and western painting and sculpture in addition to modern and contemporary art. The drawings and other graphic pieces in an inaugural show, "Picasso on Paper: Selected Works from the Marina Picasso Collection," were put to best advantage in a room with beige walls and maple floors. Taos- and Santa Fe–area artists are exhibited in a space with a knotty-pine ceiling. Terraces and verandas overlook a sculpture garden. Peters continues to operate his Dallas and Manhattan galleries, but his base—and home—remains in New Mexico. Gerald Peters Gallery, 1011 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe, NM 87501; 505/954-5700.



ROBERT RECK



ROBERT RECK

Gerald Peters's new art facility in Santa Fe, top, and galleries, above, displaying western paintings and bronzes

A WELL-KEPT L.A. SECRET

Joyce MacRae has had a number of careers: magazine editor, partner in Indigo Seas, publicist. But few people are aware that she has an antiques shop in Los Angeles called **Residence bis**. It must be said that what MacRae calls a shop is a large room adjacent to the upholstery business of her partner, Lindsay Shuford. The place is packed with 19th-century furniture, painted wood cupboards, bamboo tables, chairs, 1920s and 1930s wicker pieces, old quilts and vintage silver. **Karin Blake**, local antiques dealers and movie set designers are frequent customers. Residence bis, 4464 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90016; 323/731-9991. □



MEL WEINSTEIN



MEL WEINSTEIN

At Residence bis in Los Angeles, a ballroom chair, right, and a bamboo tab with a majolica top


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LOUISIANA PURCHASES

MARC CHARBONNET EXPLORES HIS NATIVE NEW ORLEANS

Text by Jeffrey Simpson
Photography by Bevil Knapp



COSMO CONDINA/TENY STONE IMAGES

"New Orleans has been a mecca for art and antiques since the early nineteenth century," says Marc Charbonnet. LEFT: St. Louis Cathedral presides over Jackson Square.

NEW ORLEANS IS THE city of sophistication and voodoo, the home of jazz and Mardi Gras, Blanche DuBois and Stanley Kowalski. It's the city beloved not only by Tennessee Williams but by writers from Mark Twain to George Washington Cable to William Faulkner to Truman Capote. Needless to say, New Orleans, with its multicultural history, decadence and elegance, has some of the most interesting shopping in the United States. And Marc Charbonnet, a New Orleans native and veteran New York interior designer, knows all the secrets, from Royal Street to Magazine Street, from the French Quarter to the Garden District.





ABOVE: "Angèle Parlange, who is from an old Louisiana family, carries wonderful fabrics, furniture and accessories." RIGHT: The designer stands next to a dressing screen.

"My father's office was on Royal Street," says Charbonnet, "and as a child I would go to the French Quarter to see him, to view Mardi Gras, to visit restaurants and eat pralines. My parents were horrified that at an early age I could get on the Magazine Street bus and shop both sides of the street—distinctly lower end then, which is true no longer."

Over the years, as Charbonnet's shopping turned into a significant part of his successful design business, which includes Michael J. Fox as a client (see *Architectural Digest*, October 1997), he found

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timepieces

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LOUISIANA PURCHASES

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New Orleans to be a source for everything from eighteenth-century English furniture to Louisiana plantation pieces—and at a fraction of New York prices. "Sometimes the shops get my shipping order mixed up with other New York addresses, and I see pieces that are going to the top Madison Avenue antiques galleries," he says with a wicked grin. "I can tell you that when those items appear on the floor on Madison Avenue, there's a big difference in price from what it was in New Orleans. It's no wonder I go home at least four times a year just to shop."

BELOW: Charbonnet reclines on an American Empire méridienne at WM 19th Century Antiques. RIGHT: The shop's American and English pieces include a Regency sideboard.





Some of Charbonnet's current favorites in the city start at the top of the long curve of Magazine Street, in the neighborhood of Tulane University. The stores are dotted through the Garden District, the area built up with white colonnaded mansions by "Americans" after the purchase of the city from the French in 1803. The designer also ventures into the Warehouse District, near the river, a formerly seedy site that experienced a revival after the World's Fair in 1984. He often ends up in the French Quarter, the Vieux Carré, the glamorous and mysterious heart of the old city, where it all began in 1718.

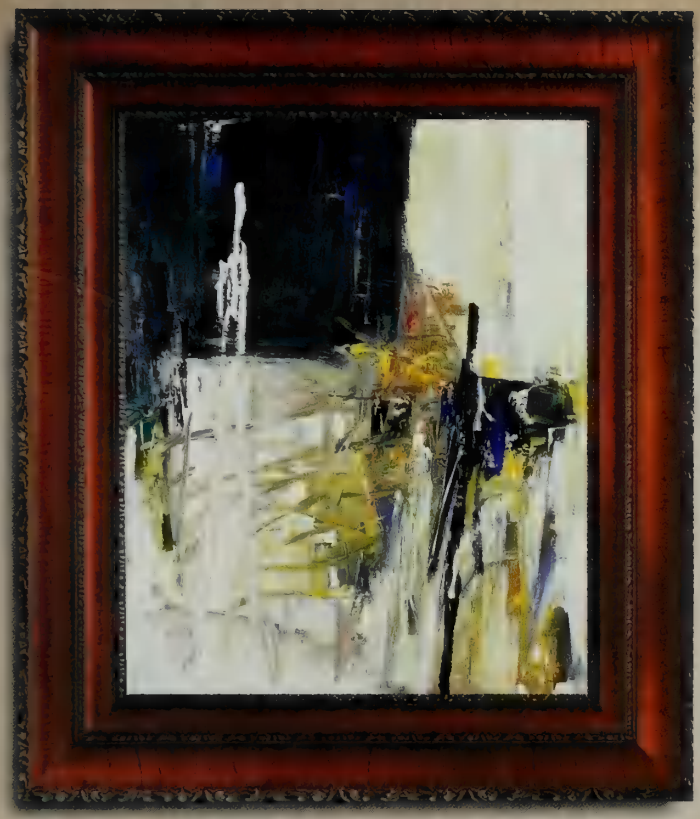
Charbonnet's first stop is at the shop of Angèle Parlange, in a white clapboard building not too far from the university. "Angèle's a remarkable talent," he says. "She's the best of today and the best of yesterday." He explains that Parlange's family still owns and operates the eighteenth-century Parlange Plantation, which has one of the most distinguished Louisiana houses on it—built in the "raised cottage" style—where she grew up. One of her ancestors was Mme Gautreau, the subject of John Singer Sargent's portrait *Madame X*.

Parlange, who has a professional background in fashion, began her career designing fabrics. Her first fabric drew on her rich family history in a witty way by printing on jewel-tone silks the signatures from calling cards left at her great-great-grandmother's Paris salon in the mid-nineteenth century. From there Parlange went on to cre-

continued on page 40



RIGHT: Stephen A. Moses, Michelle LeBlanc Tompson and Charbonnet inspect a Louisiana *gondole* chair at Neal Auction. "They showcase high-quality antiques."



CRAIG PONZIO

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LOUISIANA PURCHASES

continued from page 38

ate furniture with a New Orleans theme, such as a bed and chair that incorporate an outsize version of the crown on her great-great-grandmother's own calling card.

The shop has pillows made with fabrics designed by Parlange and decorated with unusual trim, and antiques, jewelry and home accessories. "I do a lot of entertaining, so I've made collections relating to that—placemats, napkins and so forth," she says.

"You can find what you're looking for there, but she also has the most unexpected things," concludes Charbonnet, citing a collection of eighteenth-century prints that he has used in his New York office, which show the habits of religious orders.

Moving on along Magazine Street and into the Garden District, the designer drops by the Neal Auction Company. "I particularly like this place," he says. "It reminds me of the New Orleans auction houses of my youth. I bought a Louisiana child's bed here when I was twenty, and an Old Paris porcelain teapot. They deal in some of the

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"Mario Villa is a talented artist who crafts the most beautiful metal furniture and design objects," says Charbonnet. The men look at one of the chandeliers on display.



JAMES LAISH

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1 ANGELE PARLANGE DESIGN
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3 NEAL AUCTION COMPANY
4038 Magazine Street
504/899-5329
Auctioneers and appraisers

4 MARIO VILLA GALLERY
3908 Magazine Street
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LOUISIANA PURCHASES

continued from page 40

finest Louisiana furnishings and objects from the estates of local people."

The auction gallery was founded fifteen years ago by John R. Neal, who is still the owner; and much of the inventory is catalogued and assembled for sale by Neal Al-



BELOW: "New Orleans Auction Galleries, which offers only the best, is located in the Warehouse District." RIGHT: Jean R. Vidos shows Charbonnet a *pietra dure*–top table.

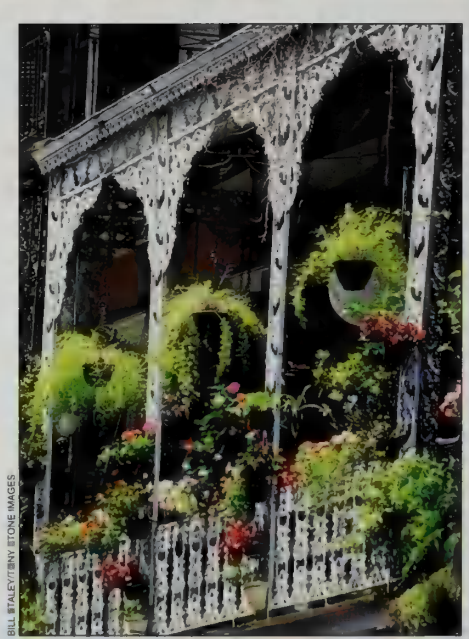


ford, his associate, who is an expert in American furniture. A little more than two years ago Stephen A. Moses was hired as its president. He is the fourth generation of his family to work in antiques in New Orleans. The family business was Waldhorn's, a Royal Street antiques shop, established in 1880. When Moses realized that none of his children were interested in being "the fifth generation," he sold Waldhorn's, found himself bored and came to help at Neal's. By putting the auctions on a regular schedule—six per year, with some "annex auctions" of less valuable pieces and some Friday night jewelry auctions, offered with champagne and hors d'oeuvres—Moses has increased Neal's sales by 50 percent.

"Neal's is a very serious auction house," says Charbonnet, who recently discovered a set of ten Louisiana *gondole* chairs there, made between 1800 and 1825.

Moses points out that the American furniture, such as matched sets of dining chairs —always hard for designers to assemble—reflects the emphasis on Louisiana and American pieces that has always characterized Neal's. "We recently had paintings by Louisiana artists Marie Madeleine Seebold, who was born in 1876 and died in 1948, and Richard Clague, who was active in New Orleans between 1850 and 1873," he says. Moses also chuckles about a piece of Newcomb art pottery, made in New Orleans around 1900, that its owners were going to give to their children to play with but instead sold for twelve thousand dollars.

"However," Moses is quick to add, "with our expanded interests in the last two years, we've also sold a circa 1710 English lacquered chinoiserie secretary, to a dealer who was going to take it back to London, as well as more jewelry and smaller pieces."



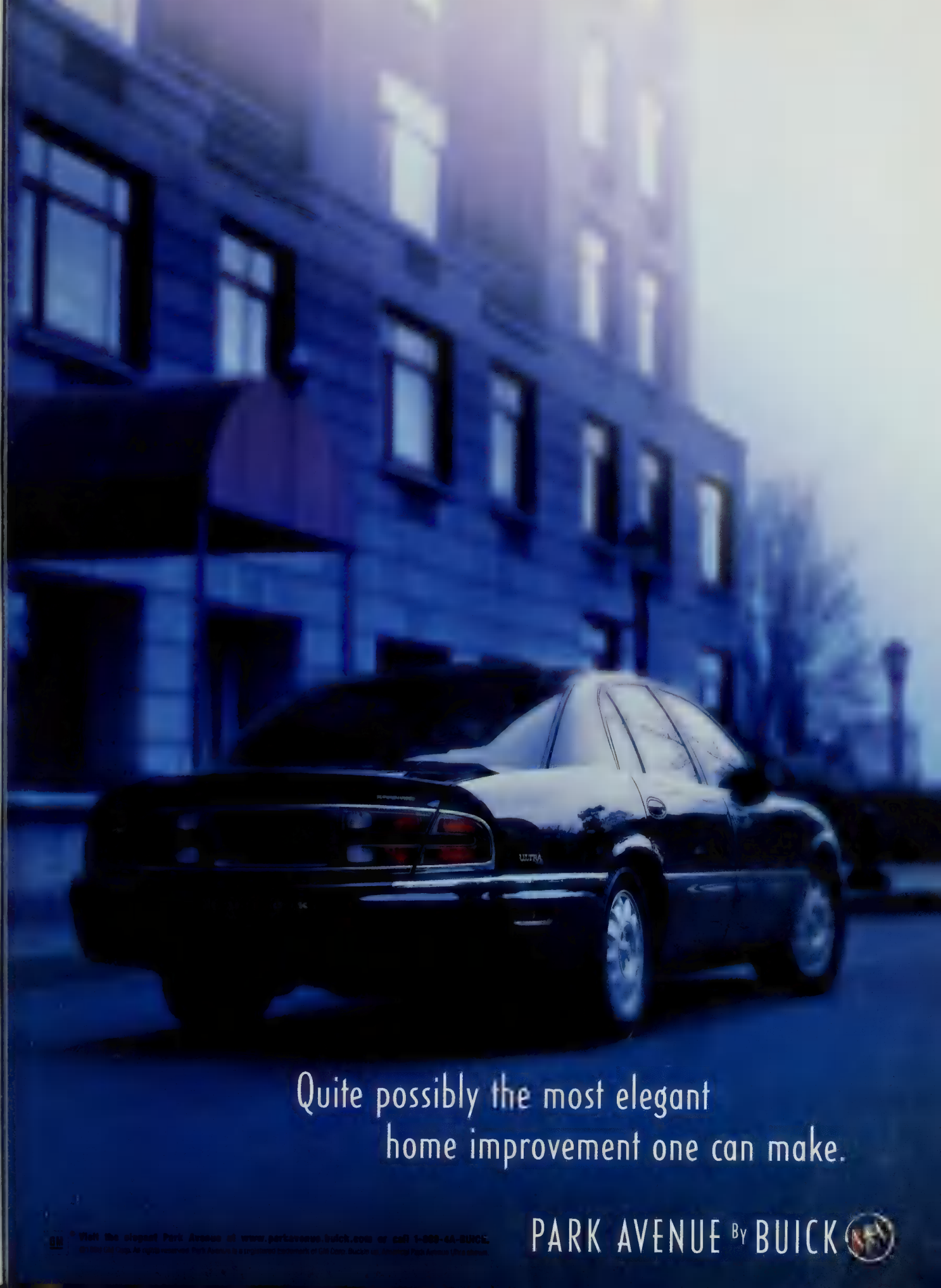
BILL STALEY/TONY STONE IMAGES

LEFT: "The charm of New Orleans never fails to seduce me," notes Charbonnet. "And as a resource, this city never runs dry. I always find something to catch my eye."

Charbonnet says that one of the nicer things about Neal's is a sense of southern courtesy. "You can call them and get the provenance of anything you're interested in, and photos, and anything else they have—all without attitude."

The next destination on

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LOUISIANA PURCHASES

continued from page 42

Magazine Street is a shop with a completely different inventory. Mario Villa is a native of Nicaragua who has a degree in architecture from Tulane University but who for many years has owned his own gallery in which he shows the steel, bronze and copper furniture that he designs, along with the work of other contemporary artists. "Beds, tables, consoles, sconces, chairs and candlesticks are all here," says Charbonnet, "in the most heavenly space, which Mario strews with garlands of magnolia leaves. He's got real style. He borrows from Neoclassicism and puts a twist on it, and a lot of his furniture anticipated the current retro interest in forties and fifties French pieces."

The gallery is located in a late-eighteenth-century building in the Upper Garden District that was once a jail. Says director Charlotte Rolfs, "This is the part of the district with all the kooks and weirdos—the interesting part."

Moving farther south on Magazine Street, Charbonnet comes to the New Orleans Auction Galleries, in the Warehouse District. One thing that he likes about the galleries, which were started eight years ago by Jean R. Vidos, is that "they're not limited to a specific period or style," he notes. "They have everything in their auctions, from cuff links to blackamoor pins to Louisiana plantation and Russian furniture to tramp art—and it's likely to all be in the same auction."

The designer, over the years, has found a set of fourteen dining chairs in the style of Duncan Phyfe there (again, New Orleans is the source for those hard-to-find sets of dining chairs) and an American Empire pedestal table from a Louisiana estate. On a recent visit he saw a beadwork fire screen with an open barley-twist pole that he says is one of the finest he has encountered.

Vidos's husband, Mike, explains that the galleries hold six major auctions per year, with eight more, featuring less important pieces, in a neighboring building. The main structure was originally a nineteenth-century commodities trading warehouse that calls to mind Degas's paintings of New Orleans cotton brokers, who would have worked in a similar place in the early 1870s. A supplementary attraction of the galleries' auctions is that they create about twenty-five vignettes for two weeks before each sale, using all of the items that have come in.

Charbonnet, who calls the New Orleans Auction Galleries "sparkly," says, "It's always fun there because you're likely to find yourself in a bidding war with a celebrity." Mike Vidos acknowledges that Martha Stewart is a regular client, and Delta Burke has a house in the neighborhood and is a frequent visitor. Charbonnet also mentions the Vidoses' parties, held nearby in their 1847 house, which belonged to southern writer Grace King, a friend and correspondent of Mark Twain's. "So often in life you anticipate something and then you're disappointed with the reality—that's not so with Jean's antebellum-style parties in her antebellum house."

Jean Vidos says, "We sell great pieces to really interesting clients; you meet people from every walk of life, and bringing them and the objects together is the perfect way to entertain. You end up being friends, and that's the advantage of running a regional auction house."

Finally, Charbonnet eases back home, so to speak, and stops at WM 19th Century Antiques on Royal Street in the Vieux Carré. Doris Mollenkopf, who owns the shop with her husband, Jeffery Witte, says, "The outstanding characteristic of New Orleans is the architecture—the good, the bad and the ugly, they're all jumbled together." This, combined with the city's reputation for fine antiques, is what lured the couple there from Pennsylvania, where they had had an antiques business for seventeen years. Their shop, located in a typical nineteenth-century building, incorporates all of their interests.

"Doris and her husband have late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century English and American furniture and decorative arts, but they have unusual examples," comments Charbonnet.

"We have nothing after 1850 or 1860," Mollenkopf agrees. "There are no high-Victorian rococo works here. The early, simpler things go so well in New Orleans houses." Although she has Louisiana furniture whenever she can ("It's hard to

continued on page 46

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LOUISIANA PURCHASES

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find!"), "the pieces don't stay," she emphasizes. "Recently I had two cypress cutting tables taken out of an old local department store that closed after one hundred years. They sold right away. People are wild for this kind of thing in New York and other places in the Northeast."

Charbonnet has found such treasures at WM as an ingrain carpet, about which he says, "It's unusual to find one so complete and with unfaded colors." Explains Mollenkopf, "Ingrain carpets were a nineteenth-century American adaptation of woven English carpets such as Axminsters. They were wool, usually with a bright geometric or floral pattern, and they came in long strips that you sewed together. You see them in conversation group portraits of nineteenth-century families. They were the first wall-to-wall carpets."

New Orleans native Charbonnet has also seen fine examples of his favorite Old Paris porcelain there. "Old Paris porcelain was made with a particular mix of clays," says Mollenkopf, "in various factories around Paris from the late eighteenth century until late in the nineteenth century. It had a nice shiny glaze; and they made figures in classical shapes as well as pieces for export, such as figures of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. Jacob Petit was one maker of this porcelain who acquired his own factory in 1830, which went on into the Victorian era. Signed Jacob Petit pieces have a 'JP' in blue on the bottom."

Charbonnet, who calls Jacob Petit "a master," says, "I purchased my own dinnerware from WM Antiques. It's white with an apple-green border, and it's a rare example of Old Paris work."

Replete from a day of shopping along Magazine Street and in the French Quarter, Marc Charbonnet is asked what he likes best about New Orleans antiques browsing and buying. "I like almost everything I see, and I want almost everything," he admits. "But what I like best is that when I call from New York and talk to, say, the people at WM Antiques about something I noticed there, they send me reams of material on it and say, 'When you're next in town, we want to take you out to dinner.' That's typical of the New Orleans antiques shopping experience." □

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THE FRELINGHUYSEN MORRIS HOUSE & STUDIO

RESTORING A MODERNIST LANDMARK IN MASSACHUSETTS

Text by Avis Berman/Photography by Peter Vanderwarker

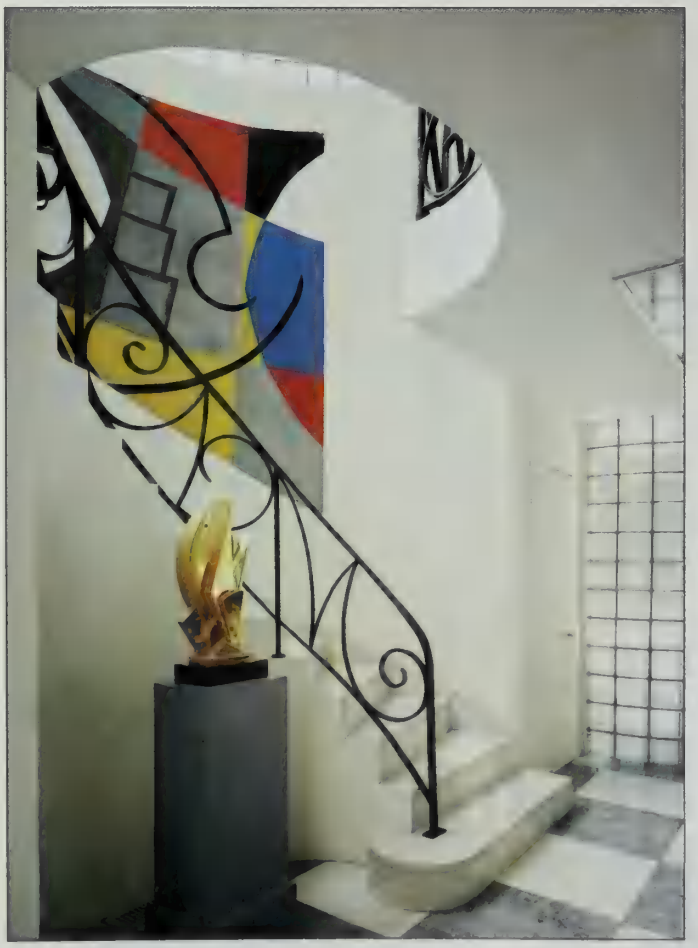


COURTESY FRELINGHUYSEN MORRIS FOUNDATION



ABOVE: George L. K. Morris and Suzy Frelinghuysen at home in the early 1940s. RIGHT: The artists' modernist house in the Berkshires is open to the public.

BELOW: Morris's 1938 sculpture *Configuration* is in the entrance hall. He designed the stairwell's wrought iron rail to complement his fresco.



ONE SEPTEMBER IN THE late 1940s, after a summer abroad, the distinguished painter and critic George L. K. Morris recorded in his diary: "Mind still alive with glimpses of Europe, and Lenox now comes as a welcome place to digest, and without loneliness." The possibility of loneliness was very real, because his wife and fellow artist, Suzy Frelinghuysen, was away at the time. She possessed a voice fine enough to sing with the New York City Opera, where she'd recently been acclaimed for her performances in the leads of *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Tosca*; her dramatic soprano was now solicited by the opera houses and recital halls of Europe. During much of the winter, the couple lived in Manhattan in an apartment on Sutton Place, but while Frelinghuysen toured, Morris often repaired to their house in Lenox, Massachusetts, in the heart of the Berkshires.

The Frelinghuysen Morris House & Studio, which opened to the public in 1998 for the first time, is an anomaly for its time and place. It was as much a confirmation of two artists' belief in each other's individuality as a declaration of their own advanced tastes. Thoroughly committed to modern living, Morris and Frelinghuysen planned their house for contemporary art and then created the art for the house.

Born in 1905, Morris was from a prominent American family with roots that had grown and thrived in the soil of western Massachusetts. A Morris had been the first governor of New Jersey, and one of his descendants was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Around the turn of this century George L. K. Morris's parents, Newbold and Helen Morris, acquired property in what is now Lenox and Stockbridge.

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THE FRELINGHUYSEN MORRIS HOUSE & STUDIO

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There they engaged Ogden Codman, Jr., and Francis L. V. Hoppin to build a classic brick manor, which they named Brookhurst. Not coincidentally, both architects were associated with Edith Wharton, who had her own villa in Lenox. Newbold Morris and Wharton were first cousins.

In 1927 Morris went to Paris, where he met Picasso, Braque and Brancusi. Two years later he returned there to study with Fernand Léger and Amédée Ozenfant; Ozenfant's studio, designed by Le Corbusier, deeply impressed the young man. When he returned home, Morris wanted a similar white-walled studio with a notched roof and a great open central space. It was to be situated nowhere but in the Berkshires, and because the land was free, Morris built it on the family compound in the shadow of Brookhurst, with the help of George Sanderson, a Boston-area architect. Sanderson was well versed in the International Style, though doubtless more in theory than in practice. Morris's studio must have been the first such extremely modern structure to be built in New England. (The Wadsworth Atheneum's Bauhaus-inspired Avery Memorial Building did not open until 1934.)



RIGHT: The 1942 frescoes and marble bas-relief in the living room reflect the influence on Morris of European modernists such as Fernand Léger.



LEFT: A Frelinghuysen fresco in the dining room, one of four, incorporates corrugated brass sheeting—a reference to the collages of Braque and Picasso.

Not long after his studio was finished, Morris secured an artistic contribution to its grounds. (Brookhurst consisted of one hundred and fifty acres as well as the main house and various outbuildings; the senior Morrises eventually divided the property among their three children, and George received forty-six acres.) Through his cousin the artist and collector A. E. Gallatin, Morris befriended the perpetually impoverished sculptor Gaston Lachaise and commissioned three works from him. The first was a full-length portrait of himself; the second was a bust. But the third piece, *La Montagne Heroique*, was a monumental outdoor work. In 1934 Lachaise went up to Brookhurst with Morris and picked out a site among a grove of

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THE FRELINGHUYSEN MORRIS HOUSE & STUDIO

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pine trees. There *La Montagne Heroique*, a massive reclining nude weighing several tons and held aloft by six cement pillars, still presides majestically on a rise above a narrow stream. Lachaise and Morris hoped the sculpture would merge with the forest and that strollers coming upon it would be reminded of an Indian temple.

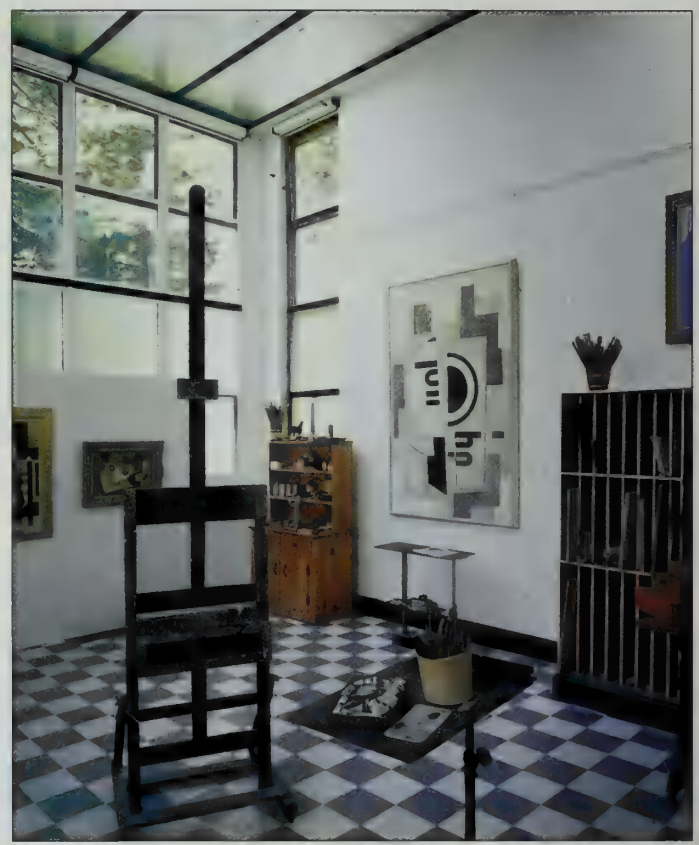
Morris was a dedicated artist, but he was never a faux Bohemian, nor did he forsake the old-line social circles in which he moved. At a wedding in Lenox during the early 1930s, he met Estelle ("Suzy") Frelinghuysen, who was six years his junior and had an equally privileged background. Tutored privately at home and in Europe in art and music, Frelinghuysen was, at the time, painting realistic scenes.

Morris and Frelinghuysen were married in 1935, and with his encouragement she blossomed into an accomplished abstract painter. Her buoyant, elaborately arranged Cubist still lifes were indebted to the configurations of musical instruments and inspired by the master artists whose work hung on the couple's walls at home. Morris gave Frelinghuysen an early Matisse as a wedding present (which visitors to the house in Lenox can see today), and the two also acquired paintings and drawings by Picasso, Léger, Juan Gris, Jean Arp and Ben Nicholson for study and pleasure.



RIGHT: Abstract forms connoting musical instruments in *Composition*, an oil on panel from 1939, hint at Frelinghuysen's simultaneous life as a singer.

FAR RIGHT: On the wall beneath the window in Morris's studio hang works by Braque and Léger; at right is Frelinghuysen's *Mural Composition*, 1951.



Morris, already a prominent abstractionist steeped in European modernism, stepped up the pace of his art-related activities: He helped found the American Abstract Artists group and became an editor and art critic for the *Partisan Review*. As Kinney Frelinghuysen, Morris and Frelinghuysen's nephew and the co-trustee of the foundation established to preserve their

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Morris designed the stucco-and-glass-block house with architect John Butler Swann; it was completed in 1941. BELOW: A rolling hill ends at the boathouse.



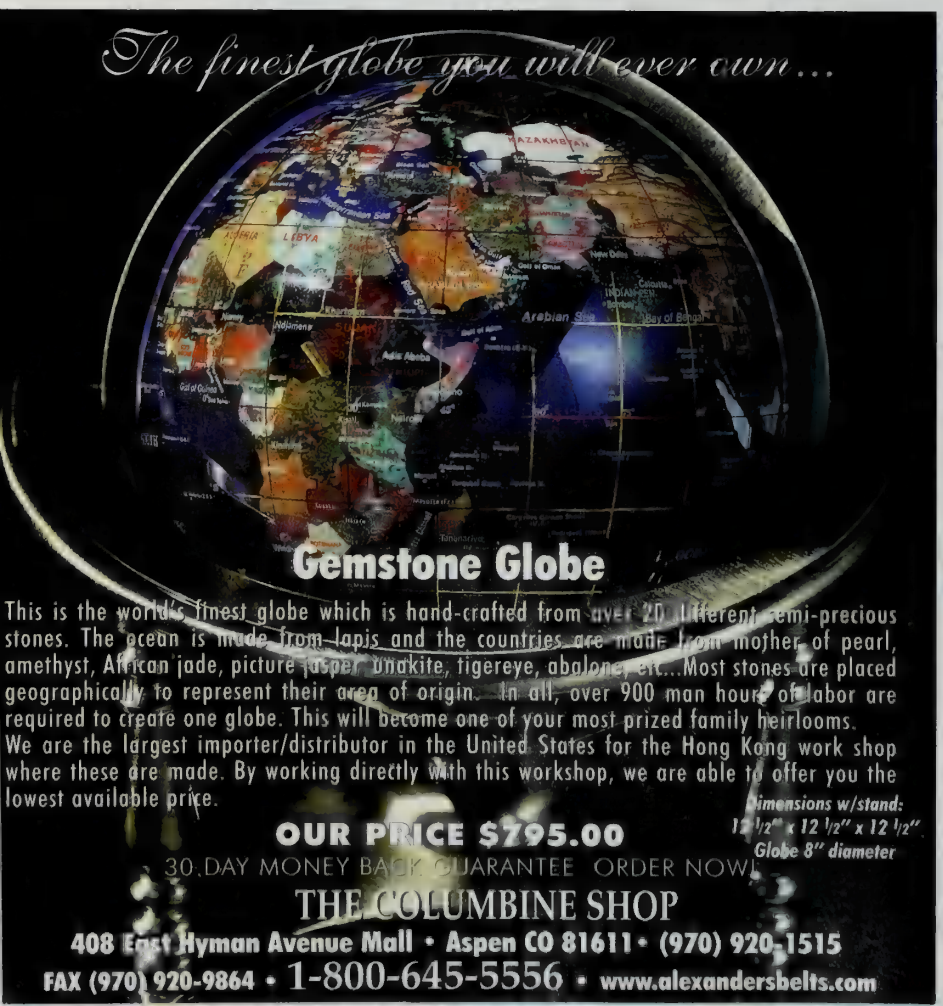

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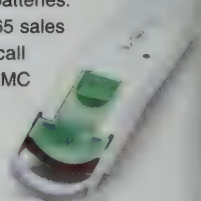
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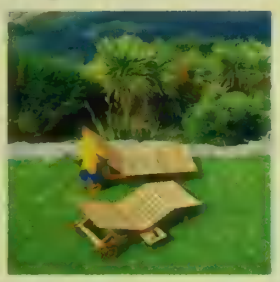
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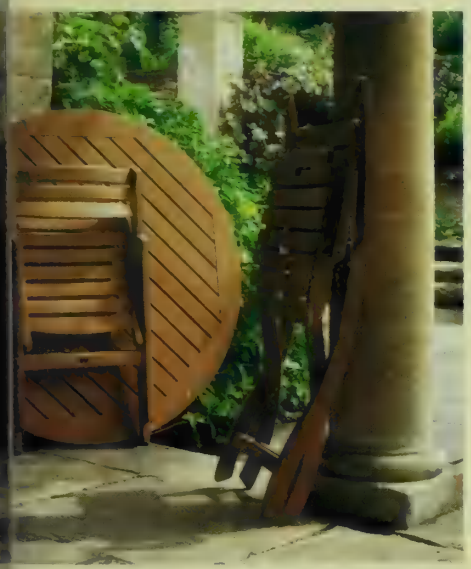
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THE FRELINGHUYSEN MORRIS HOUSE & STUDIO

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house, says, "George was this unique artistic force—without that guidance, who knows what Suzy's painting career would have been?"

Frelinghuysen's relatives had also summered in the Berkshires, and in the late 1930s, when the couple wanted a residence in the country, it was only natural that they conceived of it as an addition to Morris's studio in Lenox. They hired John Butler Swann, a local architect who had embraced the modernist aesthetic and admired the indigenous buildings of the American Southwest. Swann synthesized these leanings with machine-age materials, and the resulting design—a two-story stucco-and-glass-block house that both integrated the studio and gracefully spread its own wings across a hill overlooking a long, sweeping lawn and planted terraces—satisfied the clients' desires for a functional architecture that spoke a new language of order and clarity. That the project went so smoothly was remarkable, considering that none of the local contractors or workmen had any previous experience with building such an avant-garde structure.

According to Kinney Frelinghuysen, both artists were intimately involved in advising the architect on the design. Morris, for example, told Swann exactly where he wanted the windows in the main rooms and that there should be a large, cubelike living room. To this core space Swann added a dining room, a large kitchen and three upstairs bedrooms reachable by a dizzying cylindrical staircase. The living and dining rooms gave onto gardens overlooking a man-made pond for swimming, a tennis court and stands of apple trees, copper beeches and star magnolias.

The exterior of the house was finished in 1941, but other work was still going on, and the costs were running twice their original estimate. Morris needed extra cash, so he reluctantly sold a treasure. In 1942 he consigned Picasso's *The Poet*, one of the high points of analytic Cubism, to a show in New York, where Peggy Guggenheim spotted it, bought it for about forty-four hundred dollars and later carried it off to her palazzo in Venice.

Morris's affection for the Berkshires is apparent from the moment the house is approached. A mural in the walkway connecting the garage and the main house combines rigorously geometric shapes with biomorphic forms and symbols drawn from Native American cultures. Morris's early paintings often dealt with representations and emblems of local Indian tribes, whom he felt had roamed the woods where he had spent so many hours riding and hiking, and the simplifications of Indian imagery helped edge him into abstraction. From then on, the presentation of motifs from an earlier America, as interpreted through the lens of Cubism, transfixed him. "Abstract pictures," Morris would write in 1941, when he was working on the Lenox house, "do not spring from pure invention but are often linked, however remotely, with the artist's visual surroundings."

Neither Frelinghuysen nor Morris needed the wages that the New Deal art projects could provide in the 1930s, and they did not compete for mural commissions in federal buildings. But they clearly wanted to try this art form for themselves. In their own surroundings they experimented freely with colors and materials—particularly fresco, discovering how this ancient medium could fit into an architecture conditioned by the machine age.

> Unafraid of mixing materials on a flat wall, Frelinghuysen turned her frescoes into collages.

In the living and dining rooms, which they decorated throughout 1942, Morris and Frelinghuysen were operating at their creative peak. Morris, who had learned to sculpt from Lachaise, made three interlocking works of art for the living room. Above the fireplace he embedded a bas-relief geometric abstraction carved in gray marble from the nearby town of Lee, Massachusetts. This sculpture, subtle and serene, is flanked by two tightly unified wall frescoes in darker grays, whites, browns and yellows that demonstrate Morris's alertness to every shape and angle. Both paintings echo the polyhedral forms and ladder-like lines found in the sculpture, and they are inlaid with nuggets of ruby glass that reflect the light pouring into the room from the opposite wall of windows. The restful gray, yellow and brown palette is carried over into the contemporary upholstered furnishings and leather floor tiles from Argentina. (Although devotees of New England and its history, the couple had no interest in the folk art or antiques that so many other collectors in the area acquired.)

Kinney Frelinghuysen, who first visited Lenox as a boy, remembers family and friends gathering in the living room at the end of the day, when cocktails would be mixed in the wet bar and trays of hot hors d'oeuvres brought in, with "Aunt Suzy holding court in a tiny wicker chair, smoking her Camels." Both artists played the piano, and they would perform there, but if Frelinghuysen was practicing her music seriously, she would shut the double doors leading to the room and vocalize in private.

Frelinghuysen painted the murals in the dining room. The background walls are gray, and the main colors of her compositions range from midnight to light blue. As might be predicted, she tucked references to violins, guitars and clefs into her designs, and the crisp shapes are made less stern by their lush surfaces: Frelinghuysen constantly varied her brushwork, and visitors to the house will see bravura passages of dappling, stippling and sponging that also diversify the wall's spatial depth. Unafraid of mixing materials on a flat wall, Frelinghuysen, like Morris, turned her frescoes into collages. She attached corrugated brass sheeting that glows against its dusky background and chimes with the brass of the built-in sideboard and fireplace, giving the murals a sculptural character.

After World War II ended, Frelinghuysen took up music again in earnest and,

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THE FRELINGHUYSEN MORRIS HOUSE & STUDIO

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on the recommendation of teachers, auditioned for the director and conductor of the New York City Opera. She was an instant success, singing under the name Suzy Morris, but the life of a diva was one of intense strain. When she was not in New York, where her days consisted of "one rehearsal after another," or on tour in Europe, Lenox became, says Kinney Frelinghuysen, the place where she could have privacy and "incredible quiet." Her mornings began with a few hours of singing and musical study, after which she gardened. In the afternoon she painted. After the light faded, there was tennis, cocktails and dinner.

Frelinghuysen integrated her talents, making a connection between music and abstract art. "In painting," she told an interviewer, "you're concerned with the arrangement of forms. On the stage, which is your frame, you're concerned with arranging yourself. It's like a picture, only, of course, you're moving."

Morris offered a similar analogy years before when he wrote, "Most pictures ...require advance realization for the finished product to emerge with complete 'authority.' The artist must approach his final medium somewhat as a concert-performer faces an audience, with the numbers well learned, free to project an expressive equipment built up thoroughly in advance."

In Lenox, Morris painted, sculpted, read, played tennis and wrote in his journals. If Frelinghuysen was not with him, he wrote to her nearly every other day, filling her in on the everyday details that she was missing. In one diary entry that would later find its way into a letter, Morris contemplated the "ecstasy of sitting in clear sunshine with black shadows—the salient characteristic of Berkshires in autumn... The still high wind keeps the trees silver with movement." The artist noticed variations in color "between work that I do in summer and winter"; the physical effects of the changing seasons, particularly as he observed them in Lenox, were registered in his canvases.

In 1951 Frelinghuysen contracted bronchitis, and afterward she maintained that her voice was no longer the same. She stopped singing professionally and became a full-time painter again, executing what she always stated was her most fully realized work, a mural composition in blacks, whites and grays that was praised by Jean Arp and Ben Nicholson when they saw it in her studio. She and Morris continued to live happily together until 1975, when they were in a catastrophic car crash in Stockbridge. Morris was killed instantly. Frelinghuysen survived but lay in a coma for many weeks. After that she became increasingly reclusive and stayed in Lenox all year long.

By the 1980s, when the contributions of the American Abstract Artists group were being reevaluated after decades of eclipse, Frelinghuysen was cognizant of how much her and her husband's intimate monument to creative collaboration had grown in historical and artistic importance. When she died in 1988, she left instructions in her will that the house and its contents be preserved for an educational purpose. "The integration of living quarters with the immediacy of a concentration of works of art is a pleasurable and unexpected way to propel visitors into early-twentieth-century art," says Kinney Frelinghuysen. "People can get a sense that Suzy and George are still there, so they feel closer to the art they made."

Yet it took ten years for the artists' elegant presence to emerge into public view. The roof, the driveway, the gates and the septic system had to be fixed, and because the property lies in Lenox and Stockbridge, two zoning boards and neighbors from both towns had to be persuaded. The Frelinghuysen Morris House & Studio opened in July 1998; in retrospect, says Kinney Frelinghuysen, the hardest task was to make sure the place stayed the way his aunt and uncle had it. "I didn't have to put too much creativity into this house," he says with a smile. "It was already there. □

The house is open from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., Thursday through Sunday, from July Fourth weekend through Labor Day; and Thursday through Saturday in September and October. Frelinghuysen Morris House & Studio, 92 Hawthorne Street, Lenox, MA 01240; telephone 413/637-0166, fax 413/637-9790.









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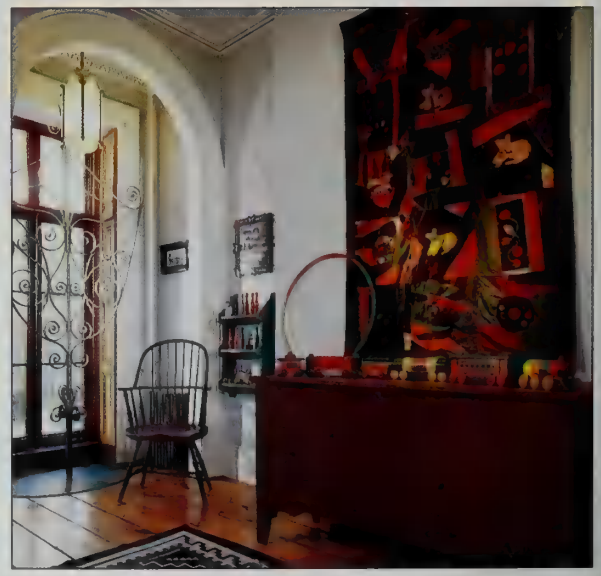


LEFT: A group of cartoon figures from the 1930s and 1940s lines a shelf in the residence and showroom of folk art dealers Jolie Kelter and Michael Malcé.

"Every other week we travel to find pieces," says Kelter (below left, with Malcé). BELOW: A 19th-century quilt hangs over a circa 1820 blanket chest.

Text by Nicholas Shrady
Photography by
Billy Cunningham





MANHATTAN HAS SELDOM looked more quaint and countrified than in the circa 1850 Italianate town house of folk art dealers Michael Malcé and Jolie Kelter. There, New York urbanity gives way to a homespun tradition of rag rugs and quilts, Native American pottery and antique signs, tramp art and sturdy nineteenth-century American furniture that still retains its original milk paint. And while the interior has the unmistakable air of a bygone home, which indeed it is, the town house on Jane Street in the West Village is also Malcé and Kelter's showroom, where everything on its four floors, from the bed linens to the kitchen table, is for sale.

"Our clients love to see our stock in situ," Kelter explains. "Often one misses an important piece amid the clutter of a traditional antiques shop or market, but here, a buyer can observe just how a particular item works or looks in a genuine home setting."

Living in a gallery, where at any moment the hooked rug might literally be bought from under one's feet, has taught these dealers and collectors to take their attachments lightly. "Naturally we grow fond of certain things —a stenciled bed, a comfortable chair, a landscape—but we have *never* deemed anything 'not for sale,'" Malcé notes. "We're not materialists; if we possess something for a time, however short, it's enough. Besides, we love the chase, so to speak, more than the kill."

When Malcé and Kelter started dealing in folk art,

continued on page 64



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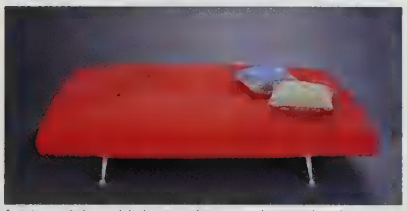


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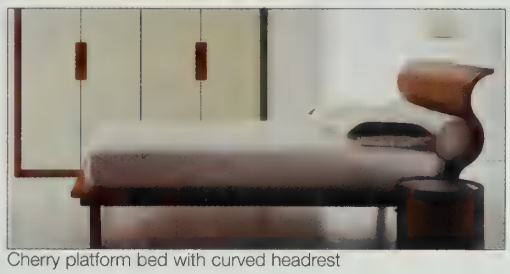


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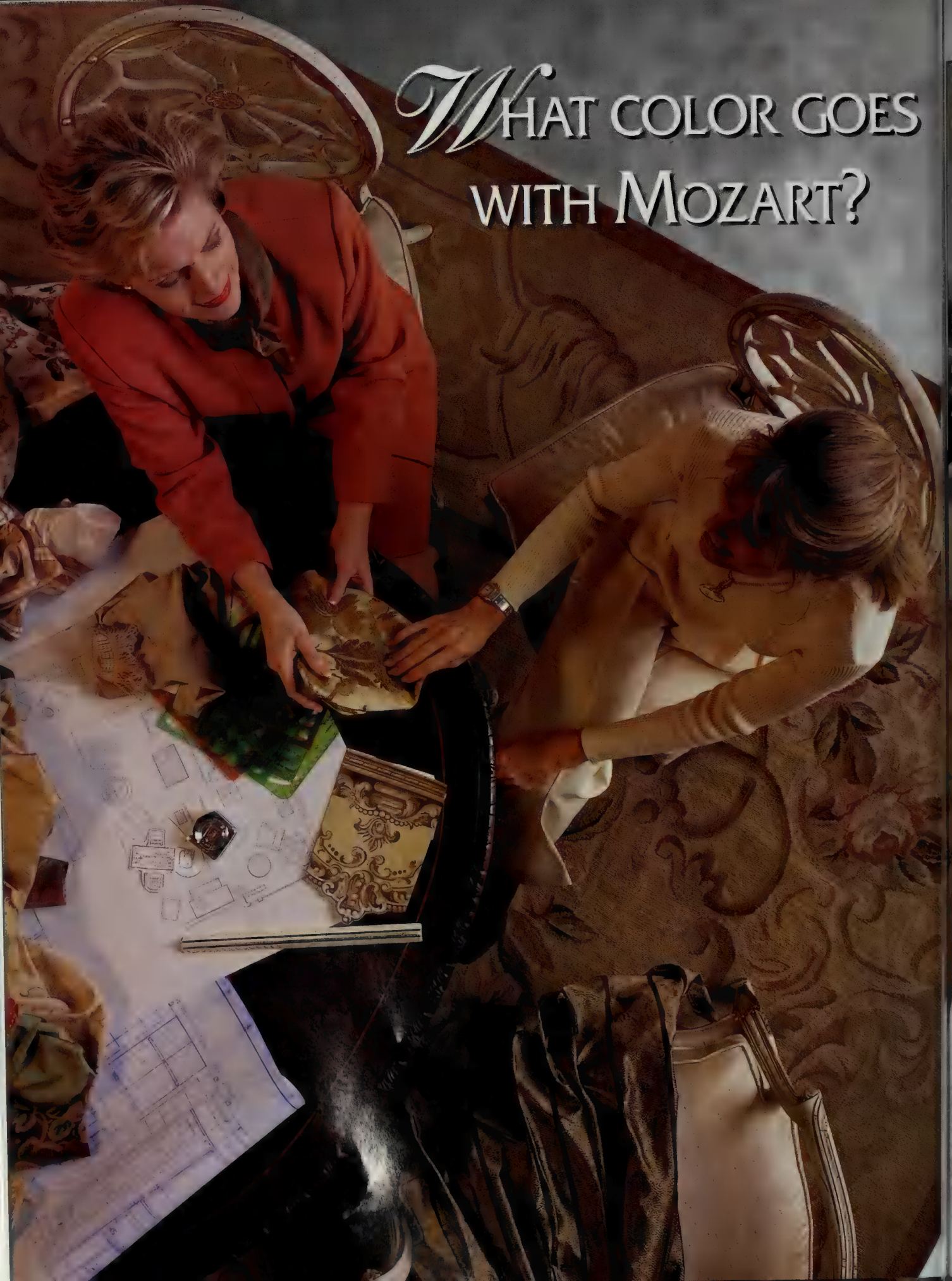
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Plate Number 16



Plate Number 101

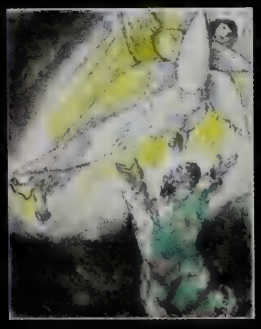


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Plate Number 80

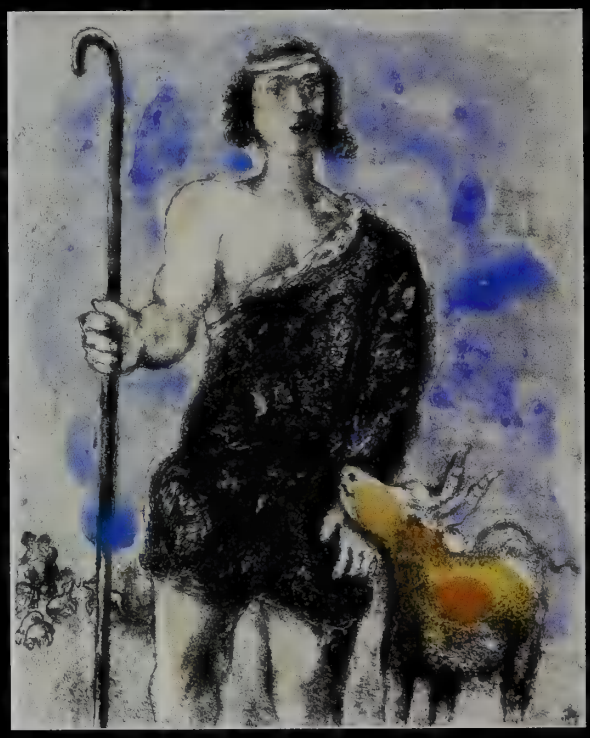


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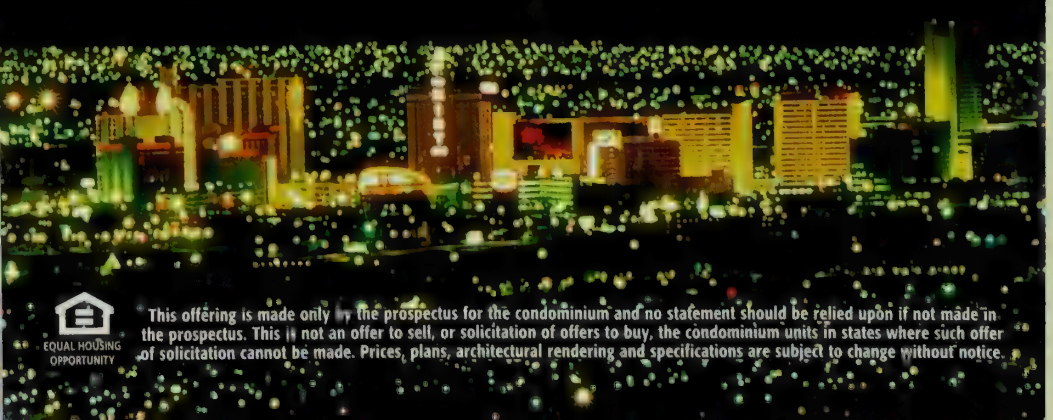
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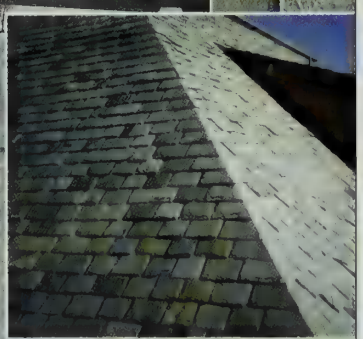


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FOLK ART FULL HOUSE



RIGHT: A chest in the living room was painted with a technique used to simulate hardwood. The mural fragment came from a Massachusetts tavern.

BELOW: "These were meant for the floor," Kelter says of the dining room's circa 1920 hooked rugs. The tabletop was made from a single board.

house not to succumb to a powerful sense of nostalgia. It is not without a tinge of regret that we look upon the best of folk art and detect two all but outmoded values, namely, patience and thrift.

"Time was abundant and resources were scarce," Malcé explains. "A Maine farm family didn't go out and buy a rug, they made one from a pile of accumulated rags. There's an old anecdote about the thrifty Yankee who keeps three boxes of string,

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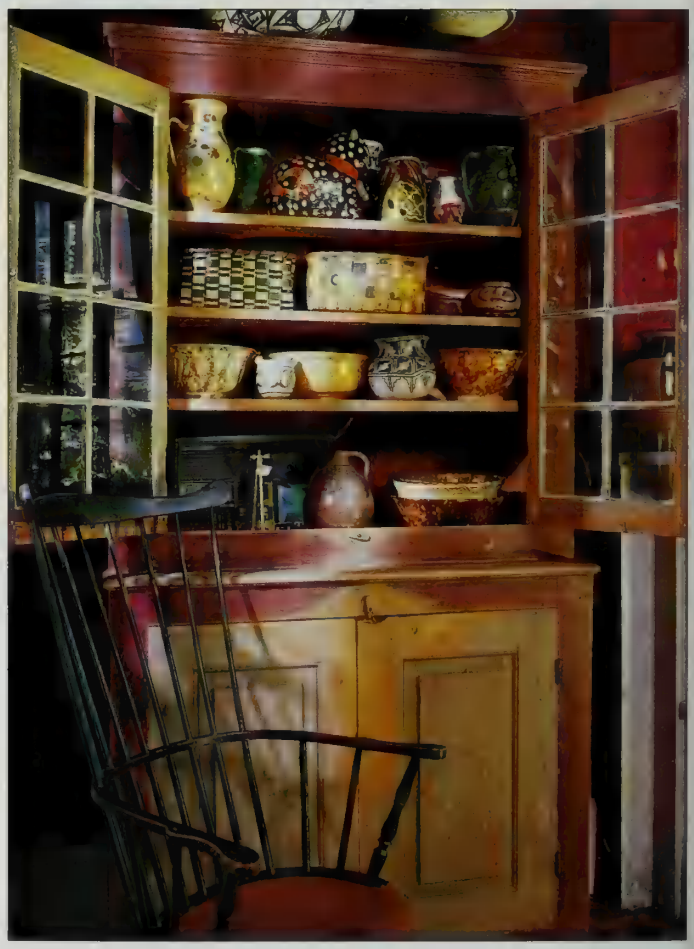
continued from page 60

in 1971, they were pioneers in a long-neglected and little-known art form. "Very few people knew what folk art was, and even fewer cared," recalls Malcé. "There was a profusion of pieces at flea markets and garage sales and hardly anyone to buy it. Now it has become extremely difficult to find, say, early American quilts, and when they do come up, it's usually at auction, where we find ourselves bidding against museum curators."

Rather than lament the increasingly competitive and specialized market for folk art, they regard the burgeoning interest in the genre as confirmation of their long-standing faith in it. "It's at last getting the recognition that we always thought it deserved," says Kelter. "Thirty years ago this field was considered obscure; today the Museum of American Folk Art in New York is planning to move next to the Museum of Modern Art."

By its very nature, folk art encompasses a rather broad spectrum, and defining its parameters is still a matter of debate. For Kelter and Malcé, true folk art has less to do with period (although 1950 is their cutoff point) or provenance than it does with the heart. "The objects we love the most were never created to be sold but to be given as gifts," Kelter points out. "They're still very much alive because they speak from the heart of the people who made them."

Indeed, it's hard for visitors to the couple's town



ABOVE: Late-19th-century French jaspé pottery, American batter bowls and Native American painted splint baskets sit in a circa 1820 cupboard.

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*Based on a July 1998 survey of Fidelity and Charles Schwab for purchases placed through a representative for no-load funds such as Vanguard or T. Rowe Price. Savings may vary based on the size and nature of trades. Fees and commissions subject to change. A complete fee schedule is available upon request.

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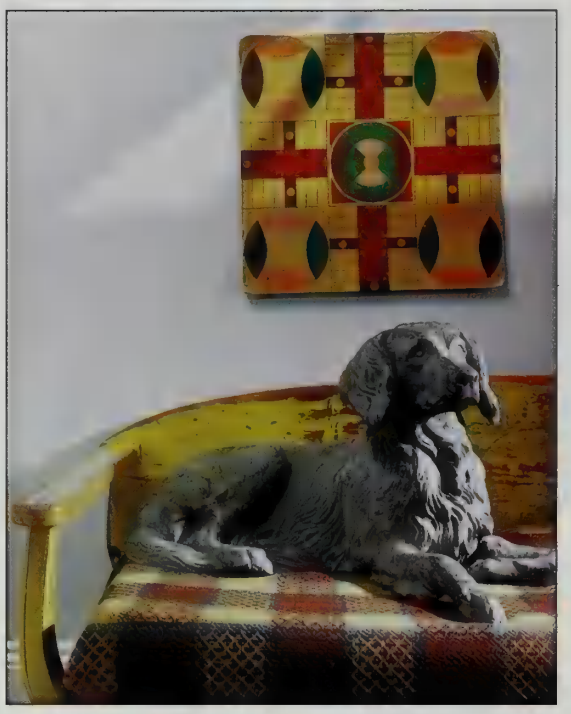
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FOLK ART FULL HOUSE

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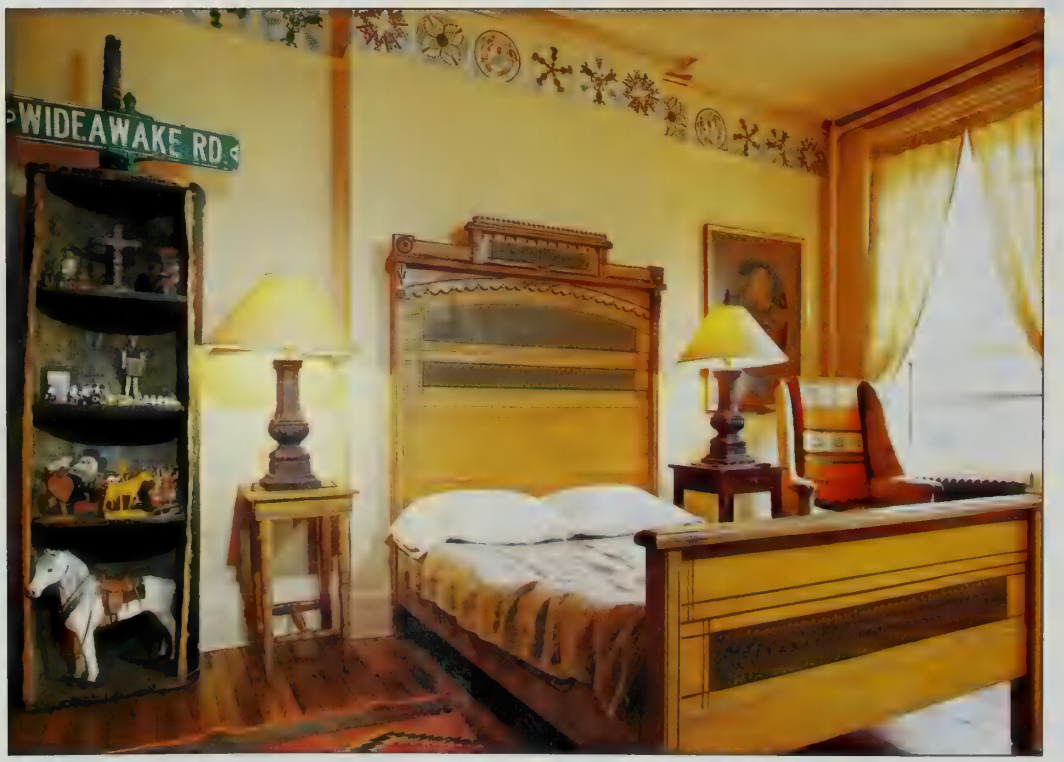
one marked 'Long String,' the second 'Short String' and the last 'String Too Short to Use.' We could all learn something from such early examples of recycling."

As Malcé and Kelter have scoured antiques stores, auctions, flea markets and junk shops from Maine to California, they have come to discover some curious strains within the folk art genre, among them tramp art, so called for the anonymous, itinerant artists who made stunningly painted and decorated boxes, picture frames and other articles from little more than what they could gather from the garbage heap. "A small box containing a few possessions might have been all a tramp owned, but they made something beautiful from it," Malcé says. "Theirs was a pure art because it was art for its own sake."





LEFT: A zinc dog sculpture rests on an 1840s daybed. On the wall is a Parcheesi game board, circa 1920. BELOW: A late-19th-century painting of a marriage proposal.



ABOVE: An 1880s "cottage furniture" bedroom set in painted pine "is nevertheless quite formal and probably belonged in a mansion," says Kelter.

Another of Malcé and Kelter's favorites is what they call "schoolgirl art," comprising the watercolors, needlepoint and sewing considered crucial to the education of young nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century maidens. While the girls were practicing dainty feminine arts, the boys were busy in the woodshop. Crowding a bookcase in a guest bedroom is a collection of painted wood Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse figures that were made by schoolboys in the thirties and forties. "This kind of school art will never be created again," Malcé laments. "Today children go to computer class. The handmade age is a thing of the past."

Unlike so many antiques dealers, who often keep the best pieces for themselves, Michael Malcé and Jolie Kelter buy and sell only what they would love to see in their own home. Their sole criterion for acquisitions is that an object, be it a weathervane, a hand-painted game board, a needlepoint sampler, or a hooked rug from rural Maine, reflect the heart of its maker, however humble. "That's still the best definition of folk art that we've come up with in all our years in the business," Kelter notes. "If it's got heart, it's true folk art." □



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THE ROYAL TREATMENT

TRADITIONAL COMFORTS IN A SMALL SCOTTISH HOTEL



LEFT: Erected in 1765 in the Scottish village of Comrie, the Royal Hotel has undergone a thorough renovation that has transformed its once dark interiors.

BELOW: The staircase adjacent to the hotel's main entrance was removed, creating space for a reception area and opening up views to the gardens beyond.



Text by Neil Sheehan
Photography by James Mortimer

IN CENTURIES PAST, TRAVELing to and from the Highlands of Scotland meant changing stagecoach horses and spending the night at the inns in the villages along the river valleys through which the primitive roads ran. Comrie, in a Perthshire valley on the edge of the Highlands where three rivers meet, was such a place, and the Royal Hotel in the village square was once such a coaching inn.

When the train replaced the stagecoach in the nineteenth century, the inns re-

continued on page 70



RIGHT: The library was "a lounge off an uninviting hall," says architect James Denholm. Guests can take tea in the new space, which features two fireplaces.



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THE ROYAL TREATMENT

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mained as convenient stopovers on what was still a long journey. John Brown, the now famous gamekeeper to Queen Victoria at her Scottish retreat at Balmoral, stayed at the Royal, as did Sarah Bernhardt, the renowned nineteenth-century actress, when she visited the Highlands.

In the twentieth century David Lloyd George, Britain's prime minister during the latter years of World War I, came to fish the Earn, the principal river that flows down the valley. And during World War II, Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, who rallied her people against the Nazis from exile in Britain, rested at the Royal during a sojourn to Scotland.

Then the Royal began to fade. The hotel was bought by the Gibbonses, a prosper-

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RIGHT: Drawings in the restaurant depict sporting scenes and were inspired by 18th- and 19th-century magazines found during renovation of the hotel.

BELOW: "The Gothic motif of the lounge bar's half-window is reminiscent of an eighteenth-century church in the village," says Denholm.



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THE ROYAL TREATMENT

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ous Anglo-Scottish family, in the 1970s, but it was leased to a hotelier who did the minimum to keep it going. When the lease expired in 1996, Robert Gibbons, a businessman and lawyer who heads the family, invested approximately two million dollars to create an establishment that a correspondent for London's *Sunday Times* recently ranked among "Scotland's most stylish hotels."

Robert Gibbons hired local architect James Denholm to accomplish the renovation. Denholm confronted an immediate contradiction: Gibbons instructed him to put light and airiness into a building with a dark and cramped interior, but he was forbidden to open up the building. The Royal, built in 1765 out of a local granitelike stone called whin, is a "listed" building under the watch of a government preservationist body, Historic Scotland. No changes to the front façade were permitted.

Assembling some engineering talent, Denholm knocked down internal bearing walls and substituted hidden steel crossbeams and columns for support in order to completely reconfigure the first floor into a bar, a library, a dining room and, where the hotel's old kitchen had been, a brasserie. He obtained light by clearing a wide space through the interior of the building all the way from the front entrance past the reception desk to the brasserie at the

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John Brown, gamekeeper to Queen Victoria, stayed at the Royal, as did Sarah Bernhardt.

LEFT: Light fabrics and simple lines were key in maximizing the airy atmosphere of a guest room built into the roof space. The four-poster is wrought iron.



RIGHT: "The master suite had been divided into two rooms," says interior designer Fiona Denholm. "We found the eighteenth-century cornice and the arch."

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THE ROYAL TREATMENT

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rear. There he was allowed to make some changes to the exterior, and so he installed a large skylight over the brasserie and an array of windows at the back looking out onto a garden.

Denholm then spread light through the first floor into the spacious bar near the entrance by opening up interior walls with glass sections framed in Gothic arches. He sanded down the library's original heart-of-pine floors to a pale reflective yellow and installed bleached white-oak plank flooring in the brasserie and dining room.

"The important thing was that Robert Gibbons had a clear image," says Fiona Denholm, James Denholm's wife, who oversaw the interior design. "He wanted a warm and friendly inn without Scottish kitsch. No tartan. We weren't mimicking Brigadoon."

She chose comfortable, traditional furnishings, and in the new dining room Gibbons added an Art Déco touch. In a shop in London he spotted copies of posters designed for the railroads between the world wars to encourage tourism in Scotland, and he had Fiona hang them on the wall.

Not that there isn't any exploitation of Scottish history. Displayed on a wall in the reception area is a large reproduction of a June 1883 guest book page signed by John Brown of Balmoral, Aberdeenshire. Above it is a photograph of the tall, strapping Mr. Brown, holding the reins of the queen's pony with Victoria mounted sidesaddle.

Because the budget had to cover everything, including the flatware, it was necessary to achieve taste without cost. The tan wallpaper in the brasserie is actually just ordinary schoolbook wrapping paper. Fiona Denholm emphasized comfort but also a certain spareness in the eleven bedrooms (one a suite) on the second and third floors, up a wide staircase that replaced the former cramped and narrow one. She had canopy beds made with only frames and no covering. "I liked the idea of a canopy bed, but I wanted something open," she says. In one bedroom, the twin beds made of old-fashioned wrought iron came as surplus from a home owned by Robert Gibbons.

Hotel bars tend to double as resident pubs in small Scottish towns, and Gibbons shrewdly wanted to retain this business in a manner that would not offend his more genteel guests, who golf, fish, walk the Perthshire hills or shoot on neighboring estates in the fall and winter. James Denholm therefore created a separate bar toward the rear of the building in a wing that was once a stable. There is an outside entrance to this bar, which has all the accoutrements of a pub—a dartboard, a pool table, a jukebox and a slot machine that consumes one-pound coins—but no connecting entrance to the hotel.

The owner wanted "a warm and friendly inn without Scottish kitsch," says designer Fiona Denholm. "No tartan."

In truth, however, the locals seem to have little interest in mingling with guests from "the South," as the Scots refer to England. Jimmy McEwan, a short, ruddy-faced man who is a retired stonemason, was having a pint in the bar one afternoon with a friend. Mr. McEwan said that he found the place congenial enough but that unlike the bar in the old hotel, it was more of a young person's spot. It wasn't a man's bar.

"It is lacking in the crack," he said. When a visitor asked what he meant by "crack," he explained that it was manly banter. A true Scottish pub, he said, was a refuge where "you come out to get away from the wife and have a bit of crack with the boys." □

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ONLINE AUCTIONS

BIDDING FOR ART AND ANTIQUES ON THE NET

By Nicholas von Hoffman

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO A friend of mine who lives in Los Angeles called me up on the other side of the country, in Maine, to ask, "Hey, do you have garage and yard sales in that hick state where you live?"

"Yup," I answered, determined not to be baited by his city slickerism.

"Well, now," he continued, "they must have old sneakers in those sales, don't they?"

"How would I know? I don't go shopping for used sneakers."

"I wish you would. I'll pay double whatever you pay for them, plus shipping," he said, trying to sound like George Soros or Warren Buffett.

"What are you going to do with the smelly old sneakers of people you've never met?"

"I sell 'em to Japanese teenagers for seventy-five to one hundred dollars a pair. Sometimes more. I'm not kidding."

And he wasn't. Battered, nicked and beached American sneakers were fetching that and more in Tokyo at the time. The demand arose from one of those flash-flood, transitory fads that race across societies where tradition and immemorial custom have given way to protean whims.

The fad-smitten in Japan didn't know that halfway around the world the object of their desires could be had for 3 or 4 percent of what they were paying. My friend did, and consequently he was getting rich—or at least enjoying a few fat paydays.

In the stock and bond business, people who make money on the difference in price in different locations are called arbitrageurs, but since the coming of desktop computers and near-instantaneous transmission of financial information, those price differences have narrowed to fractions of a penny. In like manner, electronic auctions have begun to change the most unlikely of markets, that of collectibles, antiques and art.



PAUL ZWOLAK

"Electronics will have an impact on pricing," predicts David Redden, an executive vice-president of Sotheby's, "because there won't necessarily be the differentiation one might have seen in the past between, let's say, a store in New York City and a store in Rapid City, South Dakota. Since they're both present on the Internet, the one that has the best value wins."

For an industry that sells, inter alia, signet rings, quill-pen holders and Louis XV escritoires, the arrival of outriders from Electroland has not been greeted with unalloyed joy. An executive of one major antiques business, who does not wish to be identified, remarks, "I think that the interior designer in America is a little lax in getting into the computer situation. I've spoken to a number of them, saying I was going on the Internet, and they all said to me, 'I don't even know how to put the damn thing on.'"

Nevertheless, interior designers, dealers, collectors and casual purchasers are already finding that the Internet is providing them with information on price and provenance around the globe that was all but unavailable a few years ago, except to those fortunate enough to have the staff and the money to go after it and get it. The universal low-cost access to information on everything from pork bellies to airline tickets that we see coming into existence on the Internet may finally create a free and fair world market.

"There won't be any secrets when everybody goes on the Internet," says Bruce Newman, president and own-

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ONLINE AUCTIONS

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er of Newel Art Galleries in New York City. Newman is doing his part to flatten the playing field. "We started putting our inventory on our computers about two years ago," he says. "It was a monumental job. We have six huge floors and over twenty thousand items, so you can imagine the time it took to measure everything, write up descriptions of everything and put it all into the computer." The Newel Web site, www.newel.com, is almost as interesting as a visit to the gallery itself, where you will see art and artifacts from everywhere and every time. The place is such a storehouse of the rare and unexpected that movie set designers have been known to rent some of Newman's inventory for their films.

Even though the gallery was begun by Newman's father in 1939 and is something of an institution, once Newel was up on the Web, its customer base immediately began to grow. In the first six weeks or so that the Web site was up and running, nearly six hundred thousand people clicked on to it, and they stayed an average of about fifteen minutes. "We've had hits from Lithuania, Australia, Venezuela, Ireland, the Dominican Republic, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Puerto Rico, Switzerland, the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, France, Canada, Brazil, Bolivia, Turkey, the Bahamas, Spain and New Zealand—isn't that unbelievable?" Newman asks, somewhat bowled over by it all.

Even though the cost of launching a Web page of such complexity and dimension is hefty, Newman says his presence on the ethereal network that has come to surround us has paid for itself. "We've already had a couple of major sales due to the Internet. We didn't sell pieces that the buyers saw on the Internet, but they were enticed to come to the gallery from the West Coast because they saw all these interesting things on our Web site."

Although online auction houses such as eBay, eHammer and Auction Universe, to name a few, have begun selling expensive and unique objects, we are still two to five years away from the time when online trade in such items becomes commonplace.

The electronic auction began, of course, with telephone bidding, which has its drawbacks, as Sotheby's Redden points out. "The phone auction is limited by the number of staff members available to make it possible," he says. "They relay bids to the auctioneer—sometimes there are up to fifty staff members on phones."

Sotheby's has, however, conducted its first Internet auction, with its Books & Manuscripts Department, which is less dependent on showing pictures of the objects for sale than the antiques and paintings divisions. Redden says it was a success, with 40 percent of the buyers new customers. Nevertheless, Internet auctions are still slow, since days go by between the bidding—which is by either e-mail or phone—and the announcement of the winners.

Currently auctions are conducted along the lines described by James Corsellis, CEO of Interactive Collector, a British firm that creates online catalogues for some one hundred and fifty auction houses around the world. "A certain number of items, I would say about two hundred, are put into an auction that lasts for anywhere from two to ten days," Corsellis says. "Users come to the site, register, then spot an item they're interested in. Say the current bid for an item is one hundred and fifty dollars. They might place a bid for one hundred and sixty dollars. The system will then e-mail them whenever somebody outbids them."

"But we really ought to be thinking about what's going to happen in three or four years," adds Redden. "What's going to be the impact of having full, living, streaming video, for example? Does that mean that you can actually have a complete convergence of the Internet and live auctions? Does it mean that if I want to access an auction going on in Monaco or London or Hong Kong or Sydney, Australia, I can do it straight off my monitor? The answer is yes. As time goes on, you'll probably be able to bid at auctions taking place around the world." But not yet, because the software to do it hasn't been written, as Redden knows, even though it hardly dampens his excitement and his anticipation of the day when the suspense and tingly stress of a live auction will come to your desk.

The philosophers' stone of this industry is growing the customer base, if you'll pardon the businessese. Simply put, the more people to bid, the higher the prices and the more money to be made, but customers gain, too. On the Internet they find out in a trice what people are paying in Tokyo for secondhand sneakers, or, if you will, sneakers brought to full bloom and ripeness by genuine American youths.

The cost of market information for the would-be buyer and some of the transactional costs for the seller are in the process of dropping very quickly and very deeply. Redden explains, "To the extent that the auction takes place entirely online, you don't have the exhibition costs, you don't have the guards and everybody else who stands around, so you don't need the space; you've begun to reduce the costs, potentially significantly. Now, having said that, no one should be deluded. Getting involved with the Internet is not an inexpensive process. It requires a tremendous investment in technology and a new way of thinking. There are some hurdles and some up-front costs, and in the short term it's an expensive proposition.

The universal low-cost access to information on everything from pork bellies to airline tickets that we see coming into existence on the Internet may finally create a free and fair world market.

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9:22 a.m. Important conference call in the car. "Chris, how tall do you want the midget to be, and should his trick-or-treat bag be filled with candy corn or crudité?" (Crazy, but they never prepared me for this kind of stuff at Yale.)

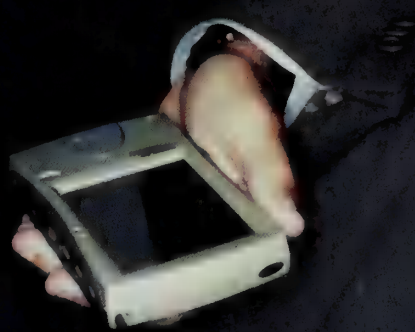
11:01 a.m. Crisis on the set. Our star canine has just mauled a stray cat. Where's my NINO organizer? Frantically search under "A" for "animal hospital"—and then "P" for "publicist" for a little spin control.

1:33 p.m. Script meeting. Heated debate among the writers. A fellow scribe asserts with passion, "Of *course* there's a difference between the *un*conscious and the *sub*conscious!" After 10 minutes of this I think, *Would it be passive-aggressive of me to simply leave the room?*

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3:55 p.m. Just got a call from the nanny—she needs the pool guy's number. My three-year-old son's been playing pirate again (and he made my Emmys walk the plank).



4:15 p.m. It's tough to organize all my fan mail. Especially when 99% of it is for that guy from *Taxi* and *Back to the Future*.

6:45 p.m. Next week's guest star issues a request: "Christopher, my loyal fans know me as a leading man—not a blue collar cop. Maybe you could alter the script to make me a former cop now in Hollywood with a successful acting career!" *Or maybe not.*

10:30 p.m. The lights are out. The audience has left. The midget was a hit. Martini, anyone?


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ONLINE AUCTIONS

continued from page 78

In the long term it's probably a far, far less expensive way to sell certain kinds of property."

But in one very expensive and important area, the future is now. That is catalogues. "Catalogues are wonderful," says Redden. "They're great collectors' items. We devote endless amounts of attention to them. They're a primary marketing tool, but they're a black hole of expenditure."

Hence it stands to reason that Sotheby's has started putting its catalogues on the Internet, thereby saving a fortune. The texts of all the firm's recent catalogues are already to be found on the Internet at sothebys.com, and a major effort is under way to get as many pictures up on the site as fast as possible, for every catalogue not printed is more than a penny saved. Christie's, on the other hand, a firm that has been relatively dormant as far as Electroland is concerned, has none of its catalogues up on its Web site, possibly because it is making money on them through its own printing facilities.

What's good for auction house and gallery is also good for the buyer. James Corsellis notes that one of the reasons information is sometimes rare and uncertain is that it has been so expensive to come by. The indispensable catalogue can run "thousands and thousands every year," he says. "A reasonably large auction house such as Bonhams will hold two or three hundred auctions a year, each with a catalogue. If you wanted a full view of Bonhams sales, you could be looking at thousands of dollars just for that."

> "As time goes on, you'll probably be able to bid at auctions taking place around the world."

The auction houses working with Corsellis's Interactive Collector are producing electronic catalogues as rapidly as they can, while Corsellis's firm—and, you can be certain, others as well—is extending electronic information services never before offered the public in any form. These include such things as recent sales histories of items from reports around the world and new ways to search out information with less wasted time and more precision. In short order, Redden says, "you won't be collecting corkscrews, you'll be collecting corkscrews made in Meriden, Connecticut, in the late nineteenth century, because the array of available material will be so vast."

As for this electro-genie, he will not be collecting corkscrews, wherever or whenever manufactured, but they're making it so easy, I fear it's only a matter of time before they hook me on something—say, transistors made in Oklahoma, circa 1958. □





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EXTRAORDINARY PROPERTIES ON THE MARKET

AUSTRALIA, LONG ISLAND, ENGLAND...

FRANCE

● Christian Dior

Among the numerous properties acquired and restored by couturier Christian Dior was an 18th-century château in the south of France, where he lived for ten years. Located in Montauroux, 15 minutes from Grasse and 40 minutes from Nice, the three-story château sits on a hilltop with views of the Var countryside. A lower garden level is parallel to a 130-foot ornamental pond with a fountain. The 11 acres of gardens and parkland, dotted with antique statuary, have centuries-old trees. 25 million French francs ($4.5 million).

For information, call the AD Estates Hot Line, 212/880-6803.



EMILE GARCIN



COURTESY PPD SAVILLS

ESSEX

● Quinlan Terry

In 1981 architect Quinlan Terry was approached by a client to remodel his country house in Great Dunmow, Essex, about 45 miles from London. The 1960s residence was demolished, and in its place arose Merks Hall. Terry, who established his reputation in England with his modern take on classical architecture, took four years to design and construct an estate with a porticoed front door and a north façade that has Doric columns on the first floor and Ionic columns above. The 56-acre property includes rose gardens, dog kennels and a pool. An additional 64 acres of land can be purchased. £2 million ($3.35 million).

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continued on page 88

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EXTRAORDINARY PROPERTIES ON THE MARKET

continued from page 85



COURTESY VIGNOBLES ET CHATEAUX

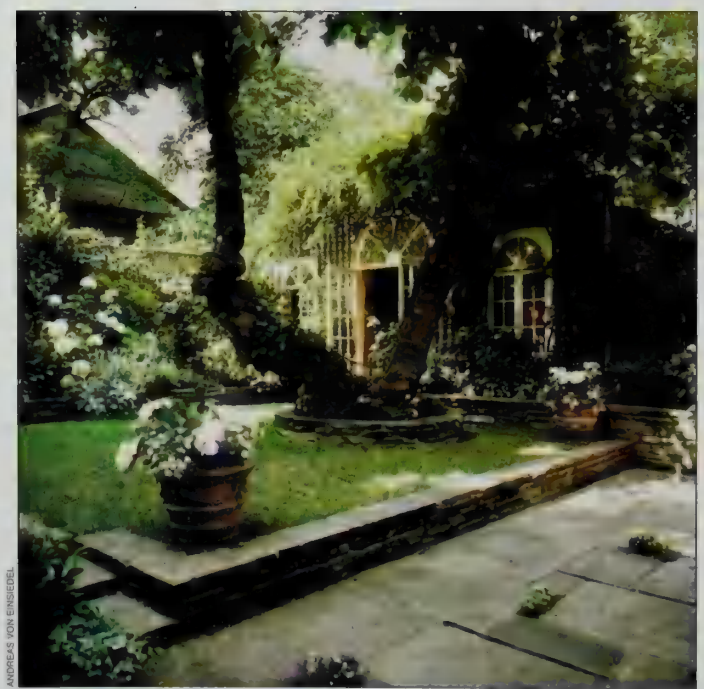
AUSTRALIA

Chatsworth House in Victoria, about 140 miles from Melbourne, is one of Australia's oldest surviving colonial mansions, built by John Moffatt in 1859–60. Moffatt left his native Scotland in 1839 and headed to Australia, initially to work for the Clyde Company as a sheep shearer before acquiring land near Lake Bolac for his country seat. London-born architect James Henry Fox was hired to design the house, and artist Edward La Trobe Bateman was brought in later to create the landscaping in time for a visit by Prince Alfred, the duke of Edinburgh, who stayed for a few days in December 1867. The circular entrance hall was modeled after the Pantheon; its walls were painted to resemble Siena marble; Corinthian pillars and cornices were painted green; and the ceiling was given a stained-glass skylight. Marble mantels for the house were ordered from the Westminster Marble Company in 1859. The Hopkins river and 15 lakes are on the 3,200-acre property, which supports 10,000 sheep and 100 cows. In 1974 the residence was listed on the National Historic Buildings Register. 25 million French francs ($4.5 million).

For information, call the AD Estates Hot Line, 212/880-6803.

LONDON

Located on Cheyne Row, one of Chelsea's oldest and most distinguished residential streets, is a double-width garden property protected by three mulberry trees that date to the 17th century. The site consists of a brick-and-stucco Grade II Queen Anne cottage built in the early 1700s, a studio drawing room added at the rear in the early 1900s, a garden house and a roof terrace. The current owners renovated the property, which has 11 working fireplaces, ten years ago and decorated it with plasterwork and paneling, antique tapestries and damasks to create an opulent atmosphere similar to Waddesdon Manor. The 20-foot-long brick garden house pays homage to Orientalism, with ornate carvings and painted Islamic designs, a Moorish-tile steam room and elaborate paisley hangings. £3.75 million ($6.3 million).



ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL

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continued on page 90



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EXTRAORDINARY PROPERTIES ON THE MARKET

continued from page 88

SOUTHAMPTON

● Henry Ford II

On Wickapogue Road in Southampton lies Fordune, which was built in 1960 by Henry Ford II. The 44-acre estate is surrounded by expansive lawns, a parkland of mature trees, pristine wetlands, ponds and nearly a quarter of a mile of private ocean frontage. The mansard-roofed mansion contains 18th-century moldings and doors from a French château and Venetian chandeliers. The entrance gallery was decorated with panels painted by an Italian artist; the 48-foot living room features antique moldings, a parquetry floor and two Italian marble mantelpieces. Within the 16,000 feet of living space are guest and staff wings, a billiard room, a flower room, a paneled library and two master suites with dressing rooms and baths. $35 million.

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MARIO NOVAK



MARIO NOVAK



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LONG ISLAND

● John Hay Whitney

On the north shore of Long Island is Plandome Manor, a waterfront community where John Hay "Jock" Whitney built an estate in 1926 as his boathouse. Whitney, who served as the American ambassador to the Court of St. James's in the late 1950s, regularly entertained guests on his yacht *Aphrodite*, which he docked at the boathouse's 283-foot pier. The three-story stone-and-timber residence was designed in the style of an English manor house. $3.75 million.

For information, call the AD Estates Hot Line, 212/880-6803.

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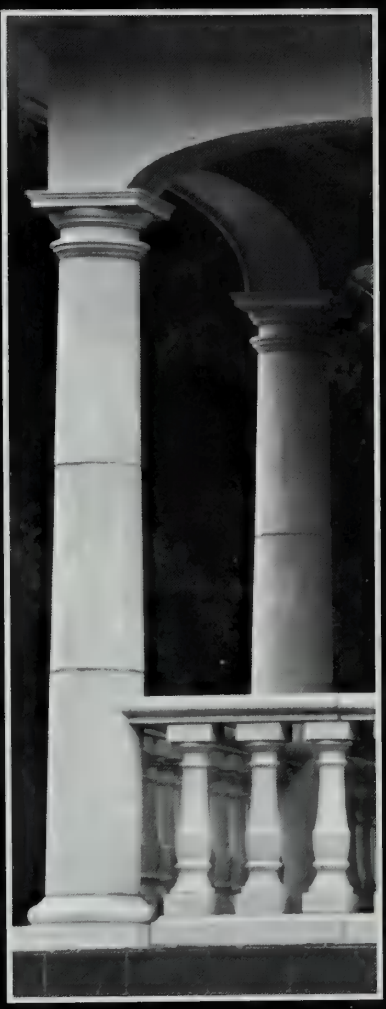
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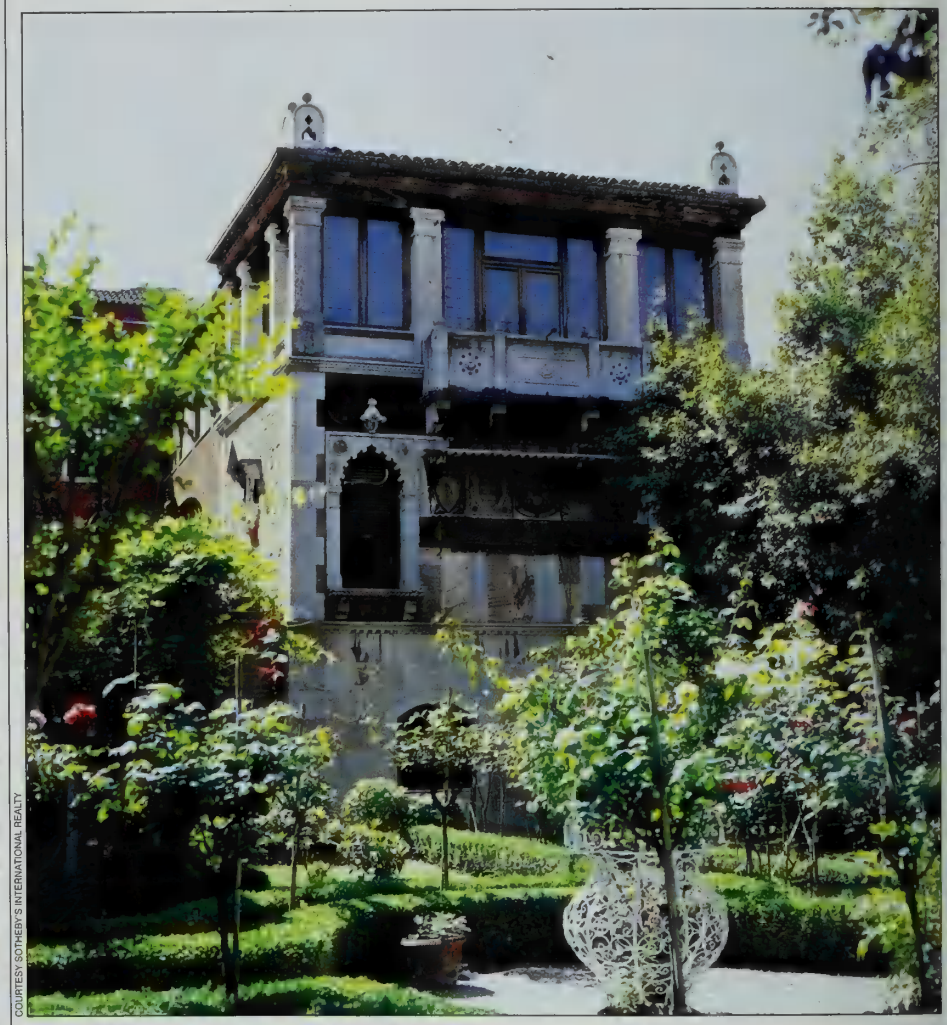
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continued from page 90



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VENICE

Ca' Nigra, an 18th-century palace overlooking the Grand Canal and situated in historic Santa Croce, was home in the 19th century to the diplomat Constantino Nigra, for whom it is named. Fleur-de-lis and mother-of-pearl inlays in the reception room floors are a reminder of when Ca' Nigra served as the French embassy in the early 1900s.

Although the main entrance is on the Grand Canal, a Venetian garden in front ensures peace and privacy. A rare second garden in the rear is planted with palm trees, magnolias and fruit trees. The palazzetto is also one of the few in Venice to have a *cavana*, a private water garage for a boat. Like many of Venice's palaces, Ca' Nigra was constructed with Istrian stone pilasters and balconies, walnut doors, and marble for the loggia and baths. The ornate façade, with arched windows on the first floor and leaded-glass wood-frame windows on the mezzanine, evokes the city's mix of Byzantine, Baroque and Rococo architectural styles. 12 billion lire ($7.4 million).

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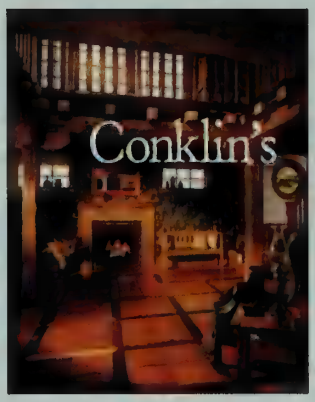
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ARCHITECTURE

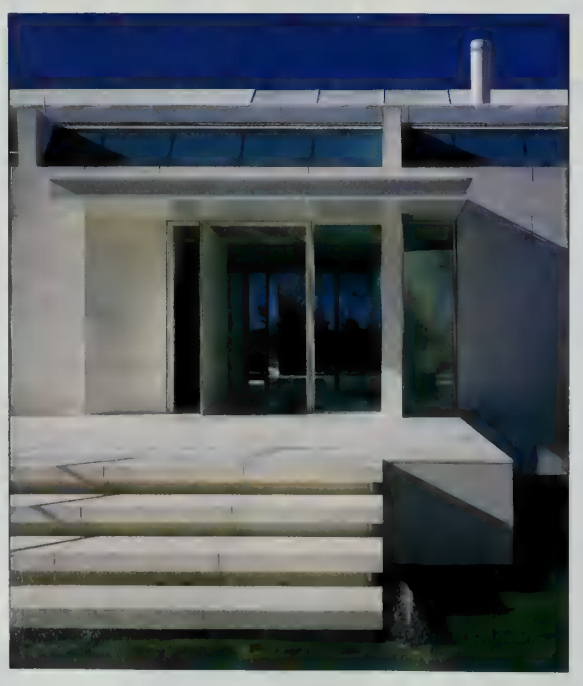
MILLENNIAL MODERNISM

RICHARD MEIER'S STRIKING NEW HOUSE IN FLORIDA IS A MEDITATION ON FORM AND LIGHT

Architecture by Richard Meier & Partners
Text by Paul Goldberger/Photography by Scott Frances

For Klaus and Ulla Neugebauer's waterfront house in Naples, Florida, Richard Meier responded to local building codes with a dynamic adaptation of his modernist vocabulary. A cantilevered butterfly roof soars over a window wall that defines the house's west façade.

ABOVE: The entrance façade's limestone wall is pierced at regular intervals by slot windows. Meier used the cylindrical form of the garage, right, to offset the linearity of the east elevation. A dense cluster of royal palms plays against the house's strong horizontal thrust.



RIGHT: A painted aluminum canopy and a pivoting door mark the entrance; the porch and steps are limestone. OPPOSITE: Sun louvers protect the glass wall of the breakfast area, at the northeast corner of the structure; a skylight runs the length of the east façade.

Let it never be said that Richard Meier's work never changes: The Neugebauer House in Naples, Florida, is like no other house Meier has ever built. Let it never be said that Richard Meier is not consistent: The Neugebauer House could not have been designed by anyone else. A striking departure and a confirmation of all that has come before—it would seem impossible for one piece of architecture to be both of these things at once, but this house is precisely that and offers both the excitement of new form and the reassurance of continuity.

At sixty-four, Richard Meier is now, startlingly, an old master among American architects. With the Getty Center in Los Angeles more than a year old and large civic projects in progress around the world, he has come a long

way from the small, tautly elegant, neo-Corbusier houses with which he originally made his reputation. Yet Meier has always continued to design houses for the same reason he makes collages and, in recent years, sculpture—they permit him a degree of formal exploration that is rarely possible on the scale of large institutional and commercial projects. The majority of Meier's houses have been further explorations of themes introduced in his first houses: They have been white structures in which an interplay of solids, voids and transparent glass surfaces creates objects of stunning beauty. The objects have gotten bigger and more complex as the years have gone on, and his clients have become wealthier, but the basic nature of the architecture has remained the same.

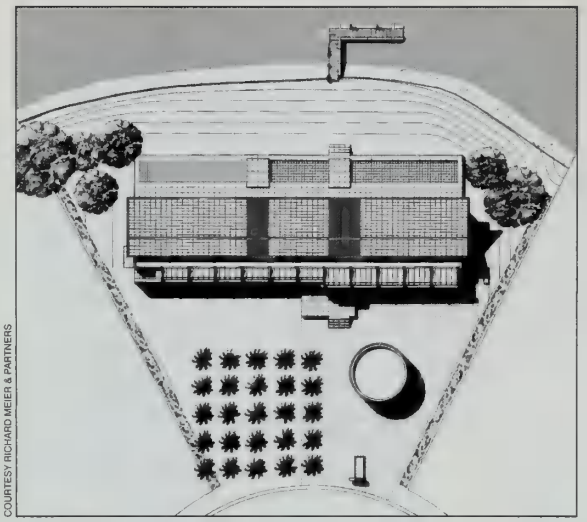
Until now. When Klaus Neugebauer,







OPPOSITE: In the entrance corridor, a slot window surmounted by a structural beam offers a tightly cropped view. THIS PAGE: The corridor spans the house and connects all of the rooms, which are aligned along the west façade. A large panel pivots to close off the space.

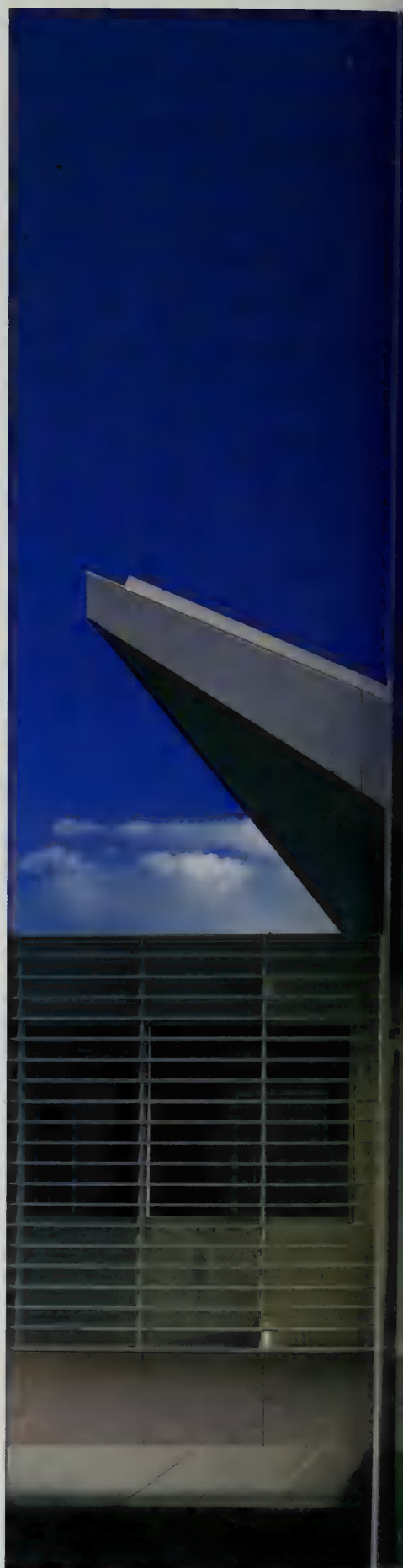


COURTESY RICHARD MEIER & PARTNERS

LEFT: A plan shows how Meier sited the 7,500-square-foot house on its wedge-shaped lot to take advantage of its waterfront exposure. The geometry of the house is echoed by the grid of palms, while the circular shape of the separate garage serves as a counterpoint.

RIGHT: Meier inverted the pitched roof required by code, creating the house's most dramatic gesture. BELOW: The maple chairs in the living room were designed by Meier. The circa 1903 lamps are by Josef Hoffmann; the upholstered pieces are Jean-Michel Frank designs.





a German industrialist, contacted Meier with the request that the architect design a vacation house in Florida for him, his wife, Ulla, and their two grown children, there were several stipulations that guaranteed a different result from most of Meier's houses. Primary among these was the issue of the roof. It is virtually an axiom of Meier's work that his houses have flat roofs, but the private community where the Neugebauers planned to build, a part of Naples, on the west coast of Florida, requires that every residence built within its borders have a pitched roof. In addition, the house would have to comply with local height regulations.

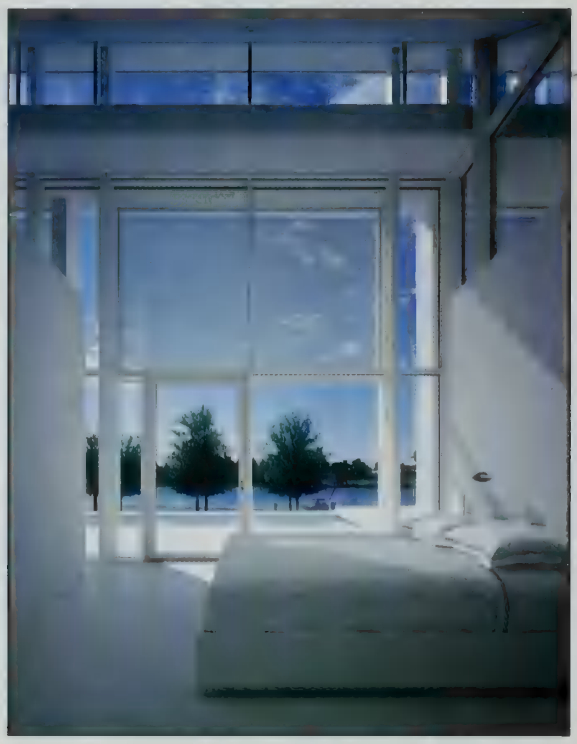
"I said I thought that might be a problem, because I didn't really do pitched roofs," Meier recalls. "I wasn't sure, at the outset, that I was right for this job anyway—I have to admit that when the Neugebauers first called and said they had land in Naples, I thought they meant Italy."

Klaus Neugebauer persisted. He made clear to Meier not only how much he admired his work but how determined he was to build a modern house and not one of the neo–Spanish revival or neo–French château–style houses that predominate in communities such as Naples. Meier agreed and discovered in Neugebauer what he later said was one of his most self-assured clients.

"I've had clients come to me without anything, and others come to me with notebooks full of clippings and pictures



RIGHT: The master bedroom opens to the west terrace, the lap pool and the bay beyond. The aluminum-and-steel-framed window wall is fitted with hurricane-resistant laminated glass; brise-soleils and electronically controlled shades temper the Florida sun.



BELOW: The reflecting pool, foreground, and lap pool are set into the terrace, providing a link between the house and the bay. OPPOSITE: At the northwest corner of the house, Meier's planes of glass, metal and stone intersect. The dining chairs are by Mies van der Rohe.

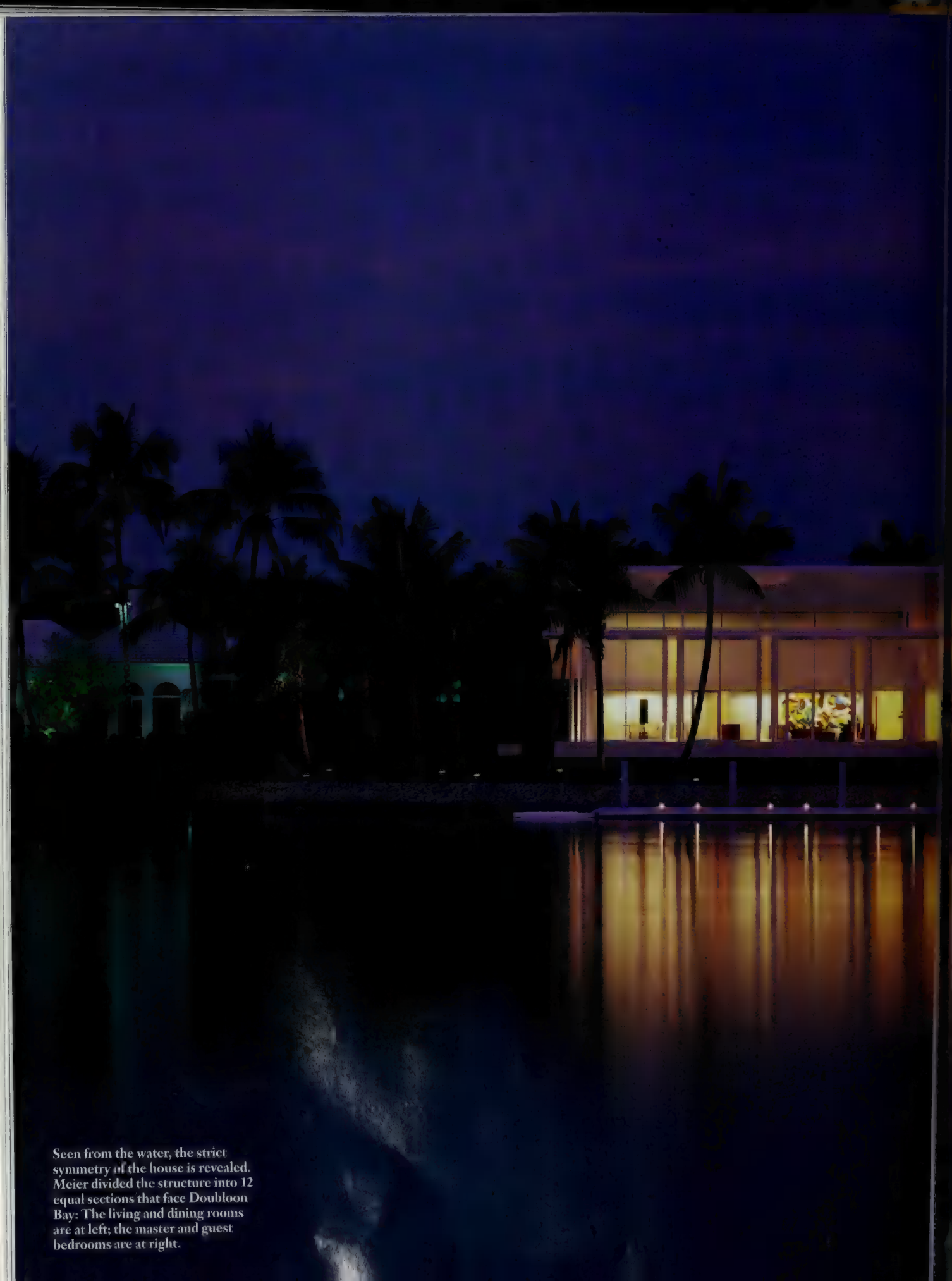
and everything," Meier said. "Klaus Neugebauer—and it was he who handled all of the early planning—was neither of these kinds of clients. He had a clear statement of what he wanted, thirteen items that he typed out on a single page. It was straightforward, and we fulfilled it exactly."

Neugebauer's no-nonsense statement, which included such items as "lobby extended to living area with open fireplace" and "one guest suite of two rooms" and "two guest rooms with bath and toilet each," inspired Meier and his project architect, Donald Cox, to design a floor plan that turned out to be simpler than any plan Meier has ever created. The rooms are arrayed in a single line, stretched out in a row facing the water; all circulation is on the land side, in a corridor that runs along a nearly solid wall facing the street. The plan is as simple and direct as that of a

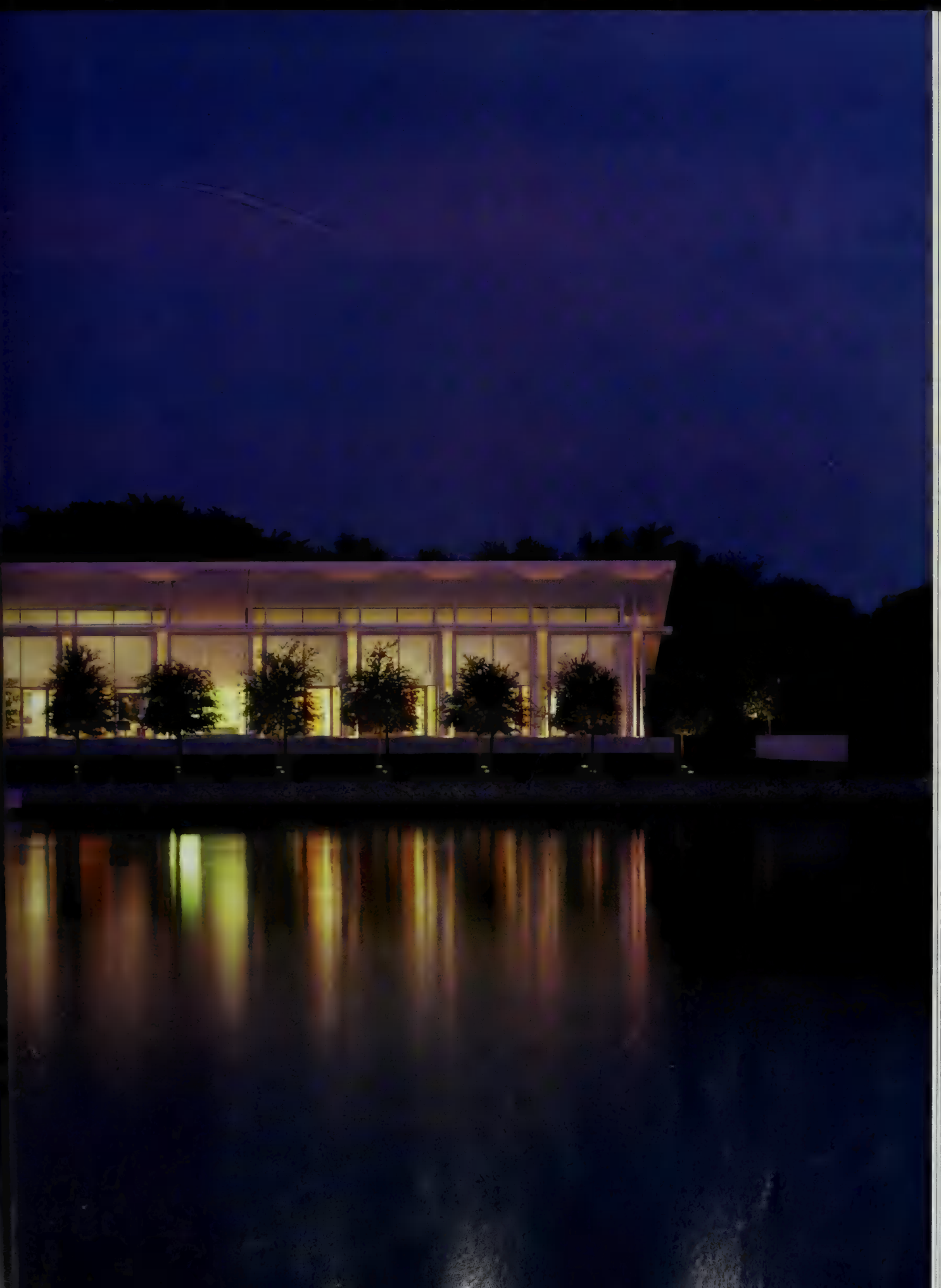
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Seen from the water, the strict symmetry of the house is revealed. Meier divided the structure into 12 equal sections that face Doubloon Bay: The living and dining rooms are at left; the master and guest bedrooms are at right.







MODERN GOTHIC IN PARIS

ECLECTIC TREASURES CROWD A RETREAT ON THE RIGHT BANK

Text by Prince Michael of Greece
Photography by Marina Faust

If he weren't a *commissaire-priseur*, he'd be making a fortune as a decorator," say the friends of Rémy Le Fur, an appraiser and auctioneer whose firm is one of the largest at Salle Drouot, Paris's legendary auction house.

Le Fur is a man who likes to move. He does so in order to satisfy his penchant for decorating, and as a result he is a regular reader of the real estate columns in *Le Figaro*. Not long ago an item caught his eye, but the neighborhood, not far from Parc Monceau, was not to his taste, and as an admirer of 1930s style, he hated on principle the neo-Gothic style described on the telephone by the realtor. Nevertheless, he decided to at least go and look at it.

To Le Fur's amazement, he found a form of neo-Gothic that was, he says, "not in the least dirty brown and ghastly, as I'd expected, but white all over," and it had a wonderful living room with a ceiling more than twenty feet high. He realized that he could use this setting to put together a complete décor inspired by his idol, the early-twentieth-century French set designer Christian Bérard.

But first he had to refurbish the space. At some time in its history the apartment, in a late-nineteenth-century building, was occupied by a pianist who gave

"I detest rigid classical design," says French appraiser and auctioneer Rémy Le Fur, who complemented the neo-Gothic bones of his Paris apartment with a blend of Art Déco, neo-Gothic and contemporary pieces. A circa 1880 bronze chandelier is in the living room.



private concerts there; later it was converted into a ballet school before being taken over by a photographer who used it as a studio and comprehensively massacred the décor. The rooms were clumsily arranged and had a number of nooks and crannies, but Le Fur found a use for every awkward space: The mezzanine became a guest bedroom, and a hallway became an extension of the kitchen. He targeted the dark pantry for a small dining room (he also has a large formal dining room); built a staircase for direct access to the cellar, which he converted into a dressing room and laundry room; and flattened the kitchen roof to make a terrace.

At this point Le Fur reverted to decorating. In the living room, he uncovered the original canvas walls under several layers of white paint. Then he began to look for furniture. "Hitherto I've liked furniture from the thirties and forties to the exclusion of all else," he says. "But since I bought this apartment, I've been buying nineteenth-century things." From a Toulouse dealer he acquired some discarded confessionals from the cathedral at Pau, which he turned into bookcases for the mezzanine. Elsewhere he bought a huge dismantled church chandelier that he refinished for the living room. At an auction he found a trove of Islamic-style chairs that Garouste and Bonetti had designed for Le Privilège, a VIP club at the famous Paris nightclub the Palace.

"In my other residences, I was content to just knock together odd chairs and sofas," Le Fur observes. "For the first time in my life, I've done a whole place over from nothing, right down to upholstering the furniture. I found the fabrics at small dealers and at Salle Drouot, notably at bankruptcy sales. An upholsterer who specialized in grandmother-style slipcovers did everything."

Le Fur has an extraordinary knack for finding bargains. As soon as he arrives anywhere, be it a town in the French provinces, India, the United States or the Middle East, he vanishes like the White Rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland* and comes back in a trice, having found the best addresses in the bazaar or the best shops in the most unexpected areas. As likely as not he will also have an armful of interesting purchases.

"I like to buy cheap. An object acquired for five hundred francs can give me as much pleasure as one bought for



OPPOSITE: "I thought I'd have to sell my thirties and forties pieces when I moved in," says Le Fur (left), "but it turned out that they mixed very well." The Jean-Michel Frank shagreen secretaire is from 1928. The leather chaise "looks modern, but it's nineteenth century."

BELOW: Surrounding a hammered iron dining table are Islamic-style chairs—once belonging to the Paris nightclub the Palace—that Le Fur reupholstered in mixed colors. The gold torchère is from the duke of Windsor's residence Moulin de la Tuilerie.





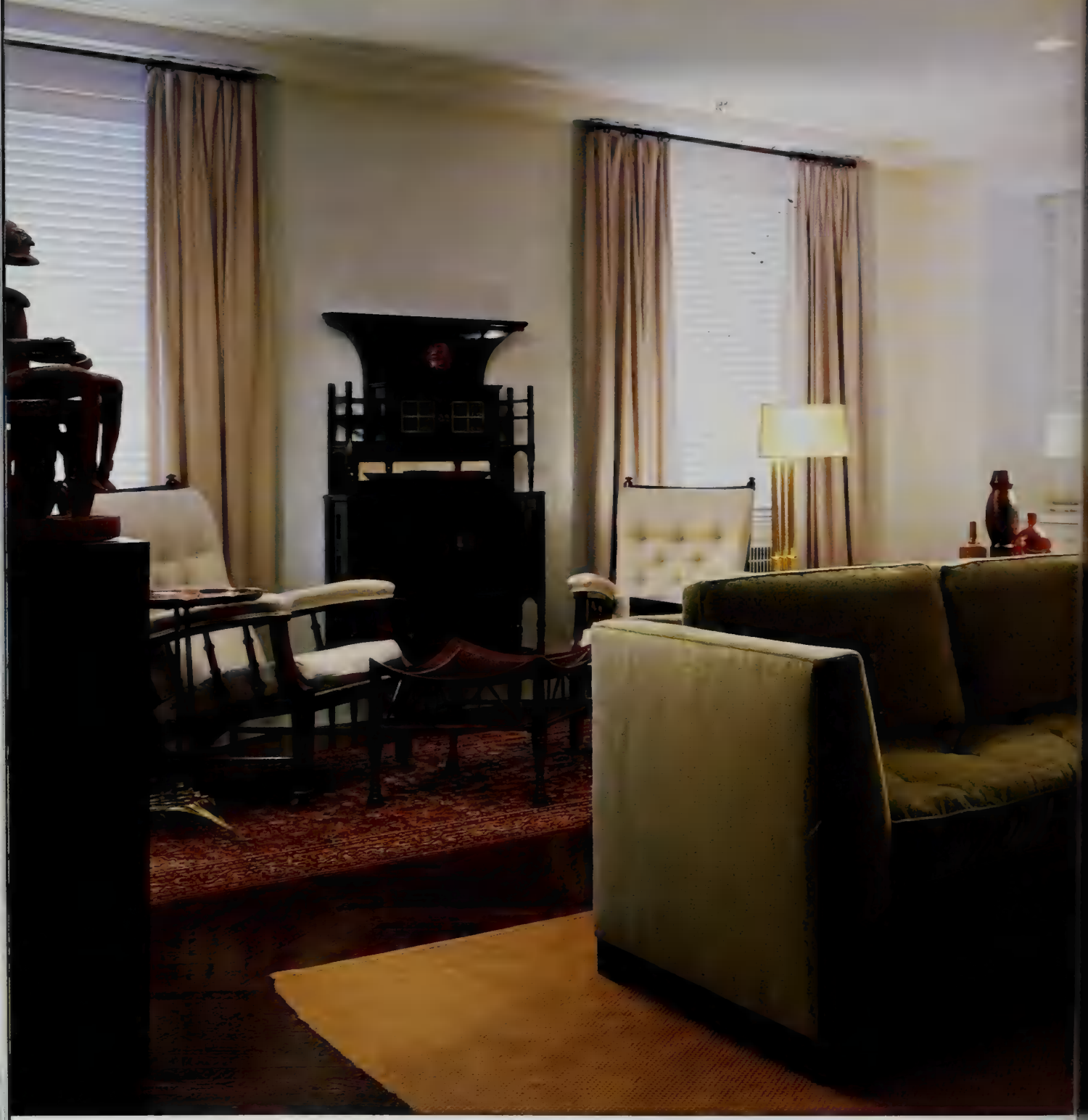
LEFT: The master bedroom has a circa 1930 marquetry folding screen designed by André Groult and a small circa 1925 Clément Rousseau palm table. BELOW: "The guest bath was in bad shape," says Le Fur, who gutted it, then covered every surface with black-and-white tile.





a hundred times that. On the other hand, if something really catches my fancy, whatever the cost, I can't resist it. For example, at Drouot I bought two of the four torchères that had belonged to the duke of Windsor for a reasonable price. Not long afterward I spotted the other two at the Biennale des Antiquaires selling for ten times more, and I bought them without a qualm."

Rémy Le Fur still has pieces by Jean-Michel Frank and Alberto Giacometti, but he feels the style has become too fashionable and overpriced. "After years of buying things from that period that nobody else seemed to want, I find it frustrating that I just can't afford them anymore. I hope the neo-Gothic style of my apartment will be as fashionable in twenty years as the thirties style is now. When the prices go through the roof, I'll have to change direction again—maybe to the Pompidou style of the seventies, which nobody cares about today." □



NEW YORK STATE OF MIND

CONTEMPORARY LINES AND COOL TONES SIGNAL A FRESH ATTITUDE FOR A COLLECTOR'S PARK AVENUE APARTMENT

Interior Design by Thad Hayes
Text by Cynthia Zarin
Photography by Scott Frances

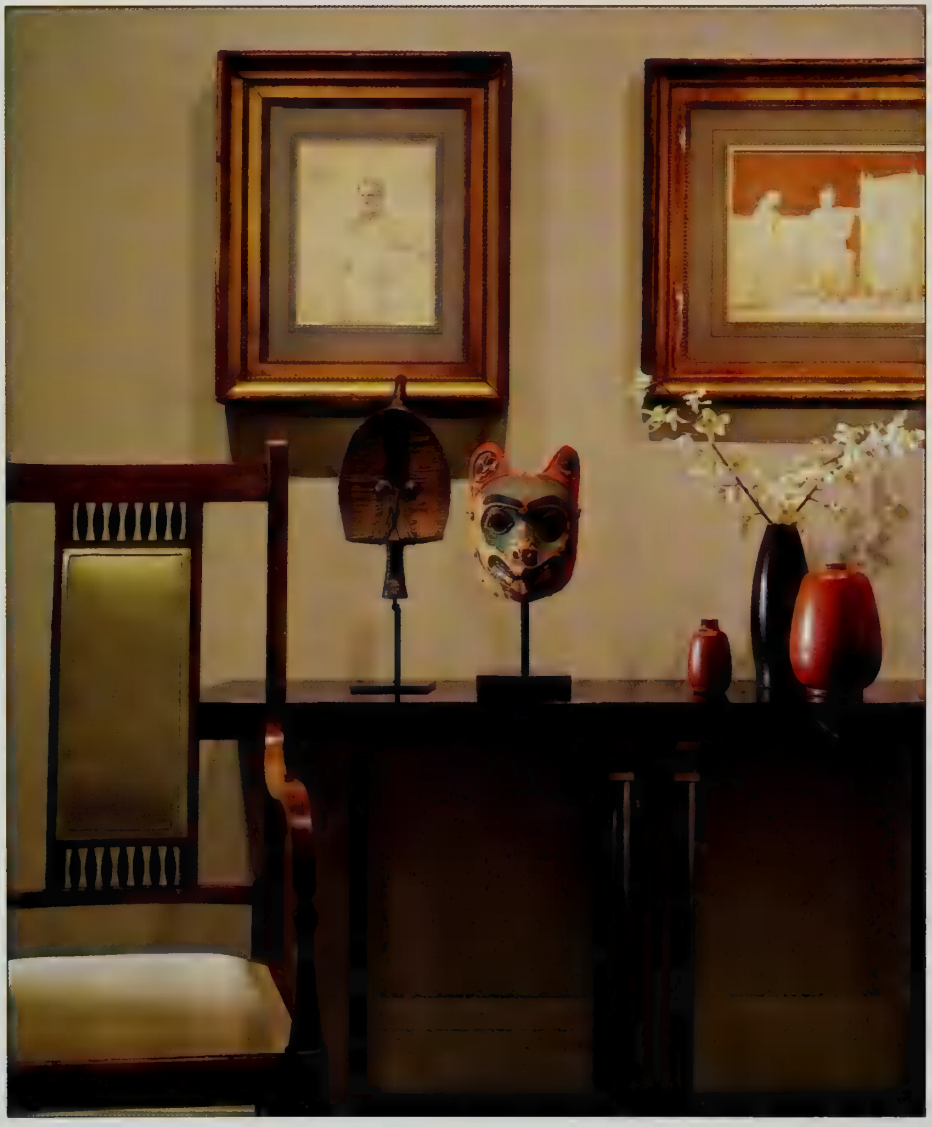


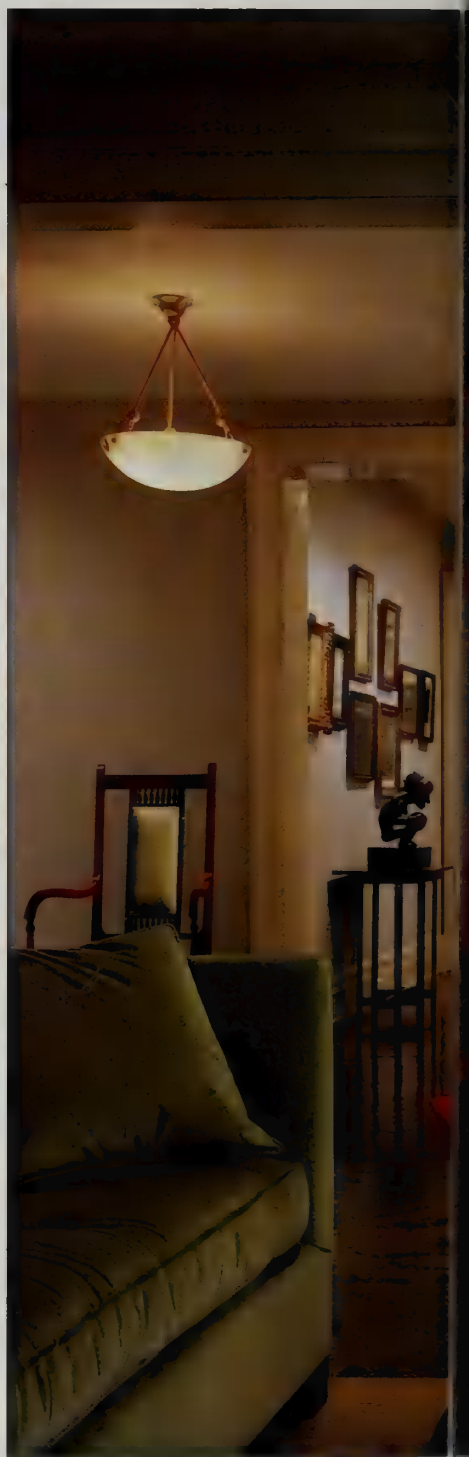
"The idea was that nothing should shout," Thad Hayes says of a Manhattan apartment he designed for a collector. On the mantel is a 5th-century Greek marble head; the drawing is by Boucher. At left is *Untitled #12*, 1996, by Agnes Martin. The antique Feraghan rug is from Vojtech Blau.

The client, a woman who had grown children and a house outside the city, had recently bought an apartment on Park Avenue, which she intended to use more than a pied-à-terre but less than a primary residence. To it, however, she planned to bring a remarkable, very personal collection of master drawings—including works by Ingres and Boucher—as well as a group of small Greek bronzes and marble pieces, African sculptures and a number of important contemporary paintings. All of these artworks represented a collection that had been built with passionate precision by the client and her late husband over many decades.

"It's rare to be able to work with such extraordinary objects," says Thad Hayes, the Manhattan-based designer known for both restraint and imagination. "It was clear from my first visit to the client

BELOW: In the foyer, a 19th-century African brass sculpture and an 18th-century Tlingit mask rest on a 1940s Jansen console, above which hang a pair of Ingres drawings. The George Walton–designed chair is from 1895. "A big part of my job was framing views," says Hayes (bottom).







that she was most at home with clean, simple design and that the project would reflect that. But really the design of the apartment emerged from my impression of the dictates of the collection."

Structural changes to the layout of the apartment were few but significant. In the entrance hall, which serves as the main gallery for the drawing collection, the doorways were enlarged and aligned, and the moldings were replaced (as they were throughout the residence). "In each instance, the new openings function as frames," Hayes explains. "It's as if each object or painting has its place in a viewfinder."

In the original layout, the long hall that now houses the drawing collection had three doorways, all on one side: one leading to each of the apartment's two bedrooms and one leading to a large closet that sat between them. Hayes removed the closet and redesigned the access to the bedrooms, which are now entered through doors on either side of a vestibule created by the closet's absence.

"The existing plan didn't work," says Hayes. "The doors broke up the hallway, which was needed to display the draw-

"We wanted the artworks to sing, so the apartment's colors had to be serene," says Hayes. "They needed to bow to the artworks, not take precedence." Kenneth Noland's *Fair*, 1960, is on the living room wall. The 19th-century seated African figure at right is from the Dogon tribe.



ings, and the place looked like a hotel: Bedrooms popped open onto the hall, and there was no zone adequately dividing communal space from private space."

There are almost no curved lines or surfaces in the apartment. The frame-and-square motif is repeated subtly in small details (square lights in the ceilings, a pair of 1940s lamps and the custom-made cube low tables in the living room) and in others writ large, such as in the lines of the bookcase in the dining room and the mantel, which Hayes had made from Indiana limestone.

Almost all of the furniture was bought for the apartment. Early on in the process, the client had seen and admired an Aesthetic Movement chair at the home of a friend. Her interest in the period led to a buying trip to London, where the movement flourished in the 1870s and 1880s.

Among the English purchases was a circa 1875 ebonized display cabinet by E. W. Godwin. In one respect it is akin to the artwork in the apartment: It is wholly distinctive and conveys the presence of the maker's hand. "It's at the far



OPPOSITE: A pair of Philip Webb–designed Morris chairs, circa 1875, sit on either side of an E. W. Godwin ebonized display cabinet, also circa 1875, and a late-19th-century Liberty Thebes stool in the living room. *Tranquil Anatomy* by Jules Olitski hangs on the wall.



end of the living room, between the windows," Hayes points out, "but to me it's the signature piece. And it helped provide an answer to the quirkiness of the room's proportions. The fireplace isn't centered, and the cabinet had enough presence to balance the room. I found myself wondering, How did people use a living room back in the late twenties and early thirties, when the building was first occupied?"

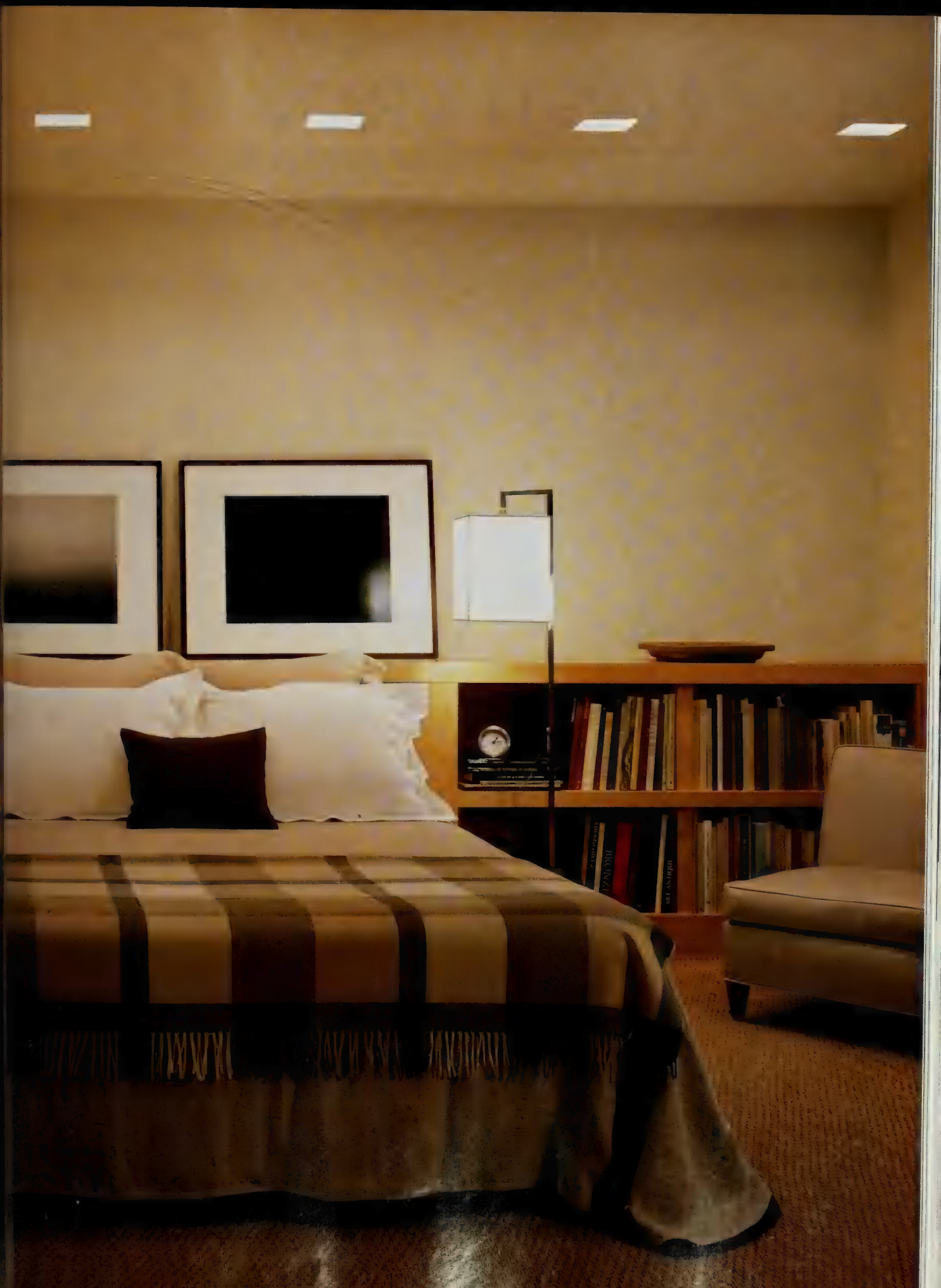
Hayes's solution was to divide the room, creating two seating areas. One is by the window, anchored by the Godwin cabinet, to which he introduced a pair of Morris chairs; the other is defined by a more formal arrangement of

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ABOVE: "I've had the idea before, but in this case it was the client's idea to combine the functions of a library and dining room," says Hayes. The circa 1870 oak table is attributed to Charles Bevan. The turn-of-the-century pulley light was designed by W. A. S. Benson.



"In the master bedroom, we had an uninterrupted wall," says Hayes. "The client liked the idea of bookcases and a display area above a modern bed." The two photographs are by Hiroshi Sugimoto. Donghia fabric for bedcovering and trim. Slipper chair fabric from J. Robert Scott.



SONOMA'S H-E RANCH



JIM McHUGH



Is it possible for a woman to love the land, her own land, and the house she created on it with the kind of passion and devotion usually reserved for a beloved person? Of course. For example, consider the vixen of fiction Scarlett O'Hara, ruthless and resilient, and the lengths she went to for love of her Tara and the red Georgia earth it stood upon. The house and the land were her very reason for being, worth any sacrifice.

In their own way, be their ...ns grand or humble, there are millions like Scarlett O'Hara all over the world in that they are ready to give their all for home and hearth, such is their emotional attachment to the places where they have chosen to live. Not the least of these is Mrs. Prentis Cobb Hale and her H-E ranch, her California *rancho amado*.

Picture thousands of acres of land, virginal and untouched, in northern California's paradisiacal Sonoma County. Picture a ranch house, now beautiful in its simplicity, complete with all crea-

...labor of love in the ...where," Denise Hale ...dobe house on her ...E ranch in Sonoma ...rnia. ABOVE: Hale ...ond that took her ...sband, Prentis ...ades to create.

"My designer friends have offered suggestions to me as they've visited over the years, but I've done the place the way I wanted to—it's my vision." RIGHT: Antiques in the living room include a late-18th-century Persian carpet, early-19th-century cloisonné birds and ivory figurines.

Text by Aileen Mehle
...hotography by Durston Saylor

DENISE HALE AT HER BUCOLIC RETREAT IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA



BUILT IN THE FIFTIES, THE HOUSE WAS ONCE A SHABBY, NEGLECTED ADOBE LODGE.



COURTESY DENISE HALE



COURTESY DENISE HALE



TOP: "To put it bluntly, the living room was hideous when I first saw it," recalls Hale. "It was dark and depressing." ABOVE: A Song Dynasty Bodhisattva is on the mantel. "I just adore this piece," she says. "I waited twenty years for it." An Indian silver lion rests on the table.

TOP: "The chairs in the dining area were truly ugly. And the dead birds on the cupboard? The space left me speechless. Yet I knew it could be made beautiful." RIGHT: An Alexander Liberman painting faces the dining table, which is set with 18th-century flatware.



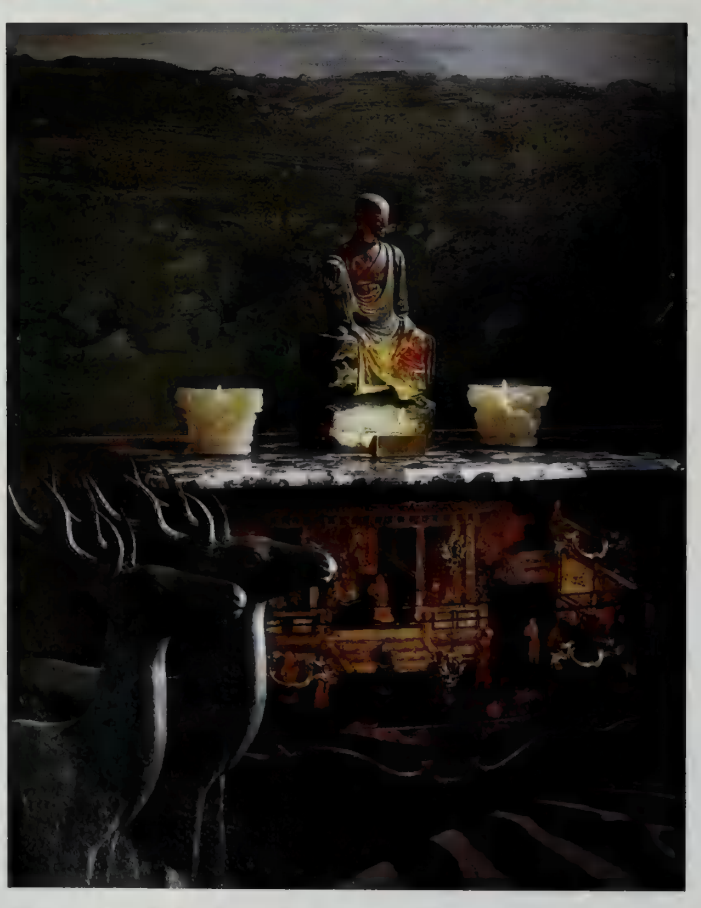
RIGHT: "Prentis used to call this 'Denise's favorite-man gallery,'" Hale says with a laugh, describing the playroom's display of photographs of male friends such as Cary Grant and Zubin Mehta.



ture comforts, surrounded by magnificent towering oak trees and glorious gardens with a vista of blue-gray mountains as far as the eye can see. Built in the fifties, the house was once little more than a shabby, tacky, neglected adobe lodge of sorts, used perhaps six weeks a year as a hunting and shooting place by its owner, the late Prentis Cobb Hale, the San Francisco tycoon and sportsman. The land was a gift from heaven; the house looked like hell.

And that was the way it was when Denise Hale, the unique personality, the best-dressed icon, the international hostess noted for her style and flair, first appeared on the horizon, before she was married to Prentis. She happily recalls that its glaring defects faded away as she was already imagining what she could make of it, a female Pygmalion considering her Galatea.

"Believe it or not, I fell in love at first sight," she says in the Slavic accent she has never lost through the years since she escaped from Communism and her native Yugoslavia, heading for freedom in a small tossed-about rowboat. "Even now, when you first come to the ranch, either you get it or you don't. It's in the middle of nowhere, quite isolated, and that doesn't



ABOVE: A Ming Lohan figure sits on a Louis XV ormolu-mounted lacquered commode before *Catlin's Ocean Ranch* by Walter Snelgrove. "The commode was formerly in my Rome apartment. The painting was in my husband's office. They belonged together."

RIGHT: "The guesthouse was two dingy rooms with two small windows," recalls Hale. "I tore it down and had the Tree House built. It's a suite for my friends, with everything in it that I would love to find as I traveled." The oil by F. B. Fairbanks is in the style of Velázquez.




MATISSE
ART NOW

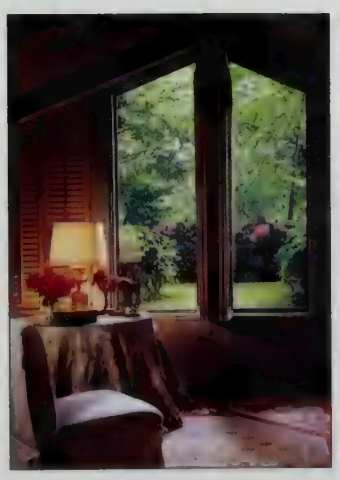
BELOW: The headboard in the master bedroom is from Florence. "The embroidery on the silk was done by hand. It was made by Emilio Pucci's Antico Setificio Florentino. It's one of the few places left in the world that still does such exquisite and delicate needlework."



work with everyone. For me, it was all I wanted. Prentis had five houses then. I said, 'I don't care if you get rid of four of them. This is the one I love. This should be our home.'

"Prentis, when he originally built the house, wanted it not to stand out but to blend in with the surroundings, and that it did," she continues. "That was the good part. Everything else was dreadful, from the floors up. Years ago I'd been taken by my first husband to visit a house in the English countryside. From the outside it was nothing, overlookable. I wondered what we were doing there. Inside, it was another story. Everything was warm and beautiful. The fireplace was glowing; the polished wood gleamed and the silver shimmered. I loved the way it looked and the way it smelled. I was so enchanted by the feeling of it that I said to myself, 'One day I'd like to have a house just like this.'

"What I tried to achieve was a replica of that lovely English house, a memory that had stayed in my mind always," explains Hale. "It took twenty years of love's labor for my dream to come true. It was Prentis's dream too. So we started right away, rebuilding and doing over





LEFT: Windows frame a garden view in the guest bedroom. RIGHT: "When you're in the Tree House's bath, you feel as if you're in the branches of the old oak, which is a hundred and fifty to two hundred years old. The toiletries are from Bulgari, the only touches of chic at the ranch."







LEFT: Teak floors, sanded-glass cabinets and copper mesh—one of Putman's favorite materials—visually connect the kitchen to the rest of the house. "The copper color is lively, and it creates reflections," she says. A 1975 sculpture by Niki de Saint Phalle rests on the windowsill.

commissions for private residences except for very close friends, such as Karl Lagerfeld, Robert and Linda Taubman, Jean-Paul Goude and James Brown.

"It's a question of assisting the person in creating their own self-portrait," Putman explains. "That requires intimate knowledge." Nevertheless, the designer agreed to see De Poortere's penthouse without ever having met him. "Perhaps it was out of sympathy, the fact that the apartment was hideous, *affreux*, that she took on the job," De Poortere says.

"I thought I could help him," Putman



ABOVE: Putman built a small office off the living room. Iron side tables by Pierre Chareau flank a reedition of a Jean-Michel Frank sofa. In the client's collection are a model of the *Titanic*; *Waardenburg*, a large 1996 photograph by Axel Hütte; and a 1995 sculpture by Ettore Spalletti.

confesses. "He grew up surrounded by vestiges of the past, and I had the same feeling about my early homes—the need to go back to a blank page. Sometimes this profession is more psychoanalysis than design."

If the French have Deauville, the Belgians have Knokke-le-Zoute, their own fashionable area on a strip of coast where the English Channel meets the North Sea. The simple beauty of the resort appealed to the designer: "It's charming. I liked the hues of the sea and sky and wanted to take them inside and work with the same vocabulary to produce something of serenity and calm."

One day, according to De Poortere, Putman arrived like a traveling sales-

man, with a small suitcase of sample materials—copper mesh, chrome, sanded glass and marble—and a plan of the space. "I attempted to convince her that some of the existing interior elements might have been acceptable in the eighties," the owner explains, to which the designer replied, "These things never were and never will be acceptable."

sliding sanded-glass doors and movable screens made of copper-mesh panels that allow air to pass through and create a play of shadows. (These partitions define a dining area, a bath and a shower room.) Putman chose teak for the interior floors, which have a wax finish, as well as for the front and rear terraces, where the wood is naturally

OPPOSITE: The bedroom's bleached teak paneling conceals storage space. Putman designed the vertical light fixture, which is recessed into the wall. Enrico Baj's collage *Belli* hangs above the bed; Robert Saint-Cricq's sculpture *Foule* is at right. The spherical lamp is by Aublet.



Thus the designer-client relationship was established.

Complete structural alterations were planned. With a single stroke, Putman began to breathe life into the space: She immediately made changes to maximize the natural light. Walls that wrapped around a central courtyard were fitted with large windows that offer a sight line from the northern terrace to the sun-warmed southern terrace.

Originally an incommodious three-bedroom residence, the apartment now has a predominantly open plan, with

weathered. Throughout the apartment, there is a feeling of continuous flow.

In the summer months, sliding sanded-glass doors screen the fireplace, redirecting the focal point toward the white sandy beaches and the gray-blue sea. Putman introduced various pieces of twentieth-century furniture, such as a reedition of a Jean-Michel Frank sofa and chair, and Pierre Chareau side tables. The client also included a pair of exquisite Romeda stools.

For Putman, however, the bath is the core of a home. Her baths are leg-

ABOVE: Putman added sliding doors to define rooms within the apartment's mostly open plan. The sanded-glass panels enclose showe and bath areas; the dining alcove, right, is behind copper-mesh parti tions. A 1970–71 painting by Andr Lanskoy is above the banquette.



endary, and this one is no exception. The tub, in white lava rock, is given pride of place in the center of the room on a marble slab inlaid into the teak floor and surrounded by a glass border lit from beneath. A small bed, covered in soft white terry cloth, sits against the far wall "and is supposed to be a luxury, as a daybed for after the bath," Putman adds. The washbasin, in electric-blue lava rock, is the only concession, along with a midnight-blue banquette in the dining niche, to the use of strong color. More prosaic elements have also been incorporated, such as the standard square buff-colored tiles in the shower room, which are set off by a band of darker mirrored ones. With Putman's typical attention to detail, no tiles had to be cut—everything has been calculated with mathematical precision.

The elegant simplicity of the apartment is a perfect backdrop for De Poortere's art collection. "My father, Carlo De Poortere, is a collector of superlative artworks and rare books," he notes. De Poortere considers his own collection to be small in comparison and says he buys simply what appeals to him. In Knokke-le-Zoute he has a number of lovely pieces, and apart from the occasional American influence (a photograph by Bruce Weber in the bath comes to mind), the collection has a definite European character. On the living room shelves, bronze sculptures by Lynn Chadwick complement several works in brass by Michel Berrocal and a piece by Max Ernst.

Although he bought the apartment as a summer home, De Poortere now spends the winter months there as well, a testament to Andrée Putman's ingenious interior scheme and her talent for adapting spaces for any purpose. And what is it that the designer herself finds most beautiful about the apartment she has created? She responds to something outside. "*Les mouettes*," she says with a laugh— "the seagulls." □



A tub in white lava rock centers the bath, which opens onto the bedroom and is "the most important room in the house," Putman says. Lighting set into the floor under sanded glass surrounds the tub. "That creates a dim, soft light—it's very nice when you're taking a bath."



WASHINGTON FOLK

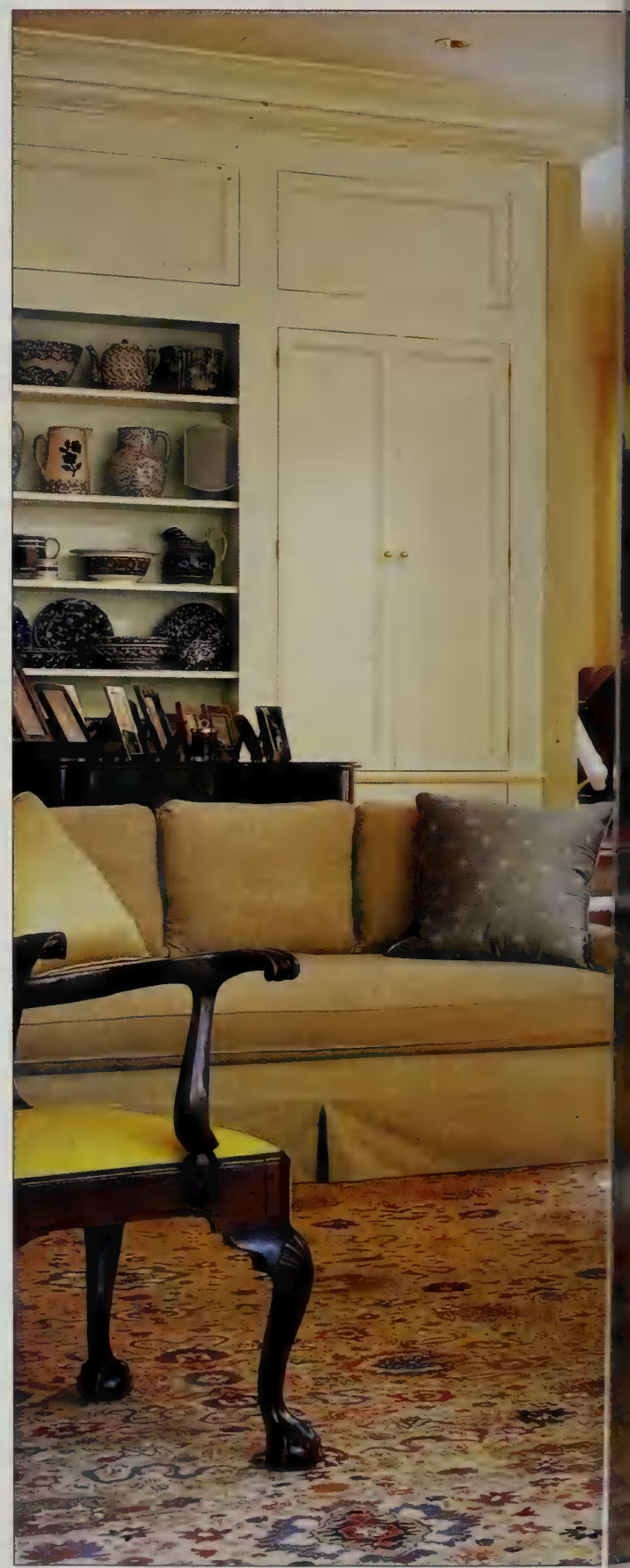


ABOVE: For a couple accustomed to light and spaciousness, designer Mariette Himes Gomez used color to reimagine a dark and narrow town house in Washington, D.C.

We weren't even sure how long we wanted to stay when we moved from New York City to Washington, D.C.," says the owner of a red-brick house in a historic neighborhood. "One day five years ago I was driving along a street and saw this cute house. It was narrow and looked like something that you might find in Greenwich Village, but younger—probably only sixty-five years old. My husband and I bought it and moved in some of our furniture. Not all of the furniture fit, because our last apartment in New York was larger, but we knew that Mariette would figure out what to do with a small residence."

Mariette Himes Gomez, the New York–based designer, has done more work for these Washingtonians than she has for almost any other clients. "Over the past twenty-five years," she says, "I've designed three New York apartments for them, plus two houses in the Northeast, two boats, a house in the West, an office for her, three offices for him and the house in Washington. It was one of the first houses I'd ever done there."

Perhaps because the owners had been in only one other Washington house before their move, they had few preconceptions about tradi-



RIGHT: "The challenge was to reorganize the clients' collection in a different kind of space," says Gomez. Milton Avery's *Yellow Robe*, 1960, and Susan Rothenberg's *Two Horses* are in the living room. Osborne & Little pillow fabric; Lee Jofa drapery fabric; Glant cream fabric; Stark carpet.

SIMPLICITY AND SOPHISTICATION COMBINED IN THE CAPITAL

Interior Design by Mariette Himes Gomez, ASID/Text by Susan Sheehan/Photography by Scott Frances





LEFT: "The clients have grown children, and with such a small place, large dinner parties weren't really part of the program," says Gomez. "So we decided to create an intimate room for intimate dining." Mirroring the setting is Carolyn Brady's *L'Avventura (Via Regnalia)*, 1982.



tional Washington interiors. Even if they had, chances are they would still have chosen to fill their latest residence with the American country furniture, American folk art objects and early-twentieth-century paintings they have collected and lived with for years. "My husband likes high-style furniture with a city feel a little more than I do, so there's a Massachusetts highboy in the dining room," the wife says. "But we both prefer country furniture."

This is evident as soon as one walks into the entrance hall. Rag rugs run along the random-plank floors; a brightly painted Windsor side chair is adjacent to a grain-painted chest of drawers; a toolbox filled with flowers sits on the chest. Hanging above the flowers is a four-tiered circa 1820 maple shelf, on which are displayed a collection of miniature bowls and bandboxes, covered in glazed nineteenth-century wallpapers, and three fabric sewing bird pincushions.

The shelf is slightly under three feet high, a fraction over nineteen inches wide and about six inches deep, but the delicate tones of the assembled objects strike the perfect note of welcome to this country-in-the-city house. Reflected in a mirror on the opposite wall, they not only make the narrow hall appear wider but also offer visitors the joy of seeing the tiny treasures twice. "It's a double punch," Gomez says.

ABOVE: The library was one room where the rich, dark colors favored by the previous owners were maintained. The hooked rug on the wall "is from a large collection, most of which is stored in another house," says the wife. "But this one seemed appropriate for Washington."

Throughout the house, folksiness and elegance combine in arresting ways. On the staircase, near the turn, are three Bennington pickle jars, each holding a single white orchid. Above them hang two Thomas Hart Benton watercolors the owners bought while living in Kansas City—one scene of a farmer pitching hay, another



LEFT: "When Mariette first suggested green walls for the bedroom, I asked her if she thought we'd be performing surgery in there," says the wife. "But then I saw the color and loved it." Alfred Maurer's *Portrait of a Lady* is above the desk. Bergamo drapery fabric. Rosecore carpet.



of two men paddling and fishing in a canoe.

The Bentons and the miniatures in the entrance hall represent only a fraction of the owners' collections. The spacious living room features their blue-and-white English and American spongeware jugs, bowls and plates and an assortment of English and American majolica and Mocha ware. It also contains two paintings of women by another of their favorite artists, Milton Avery.

The owners didn't move any walls in the house, but during the first stage of the renovation they added window boxes to the façade (both enjoy gardening). The plaster fireplace, adorned with cherubs, was redone with an old wood mantel and faced with slate; a collection of mugs and plates the husband has given his wife is arrayed on the mantelpiece.

"When we moved into the house, everything was as beautifully painted as you could possibly imagine," the wife says. "The only trouble was that the previous owners' palette wasn't ours. Harlequin diamonds had been stenciled on the entrance hall floor. The dining room was dark brown, with a burnished ceiling. The living room was yellow gold. The front hall and the staircase were wallpaper painted over in a shade I can only describe as peanut butter. One morning after about two years I woke up and said, 'I can't live with this anymore.' I don't much like wallpaper —or peanut butter, for that matter—and the walls weren't conducive to appreciating our paintings."

ABOVE: "The garden had been somewhat neglected before they moved in," says Gomez. "Fortunately, both clients love flowers. They edited and embellished it, and then we just added furniture—and ended up creating an outdoor room for the house." Furniture from Brown Jordan.

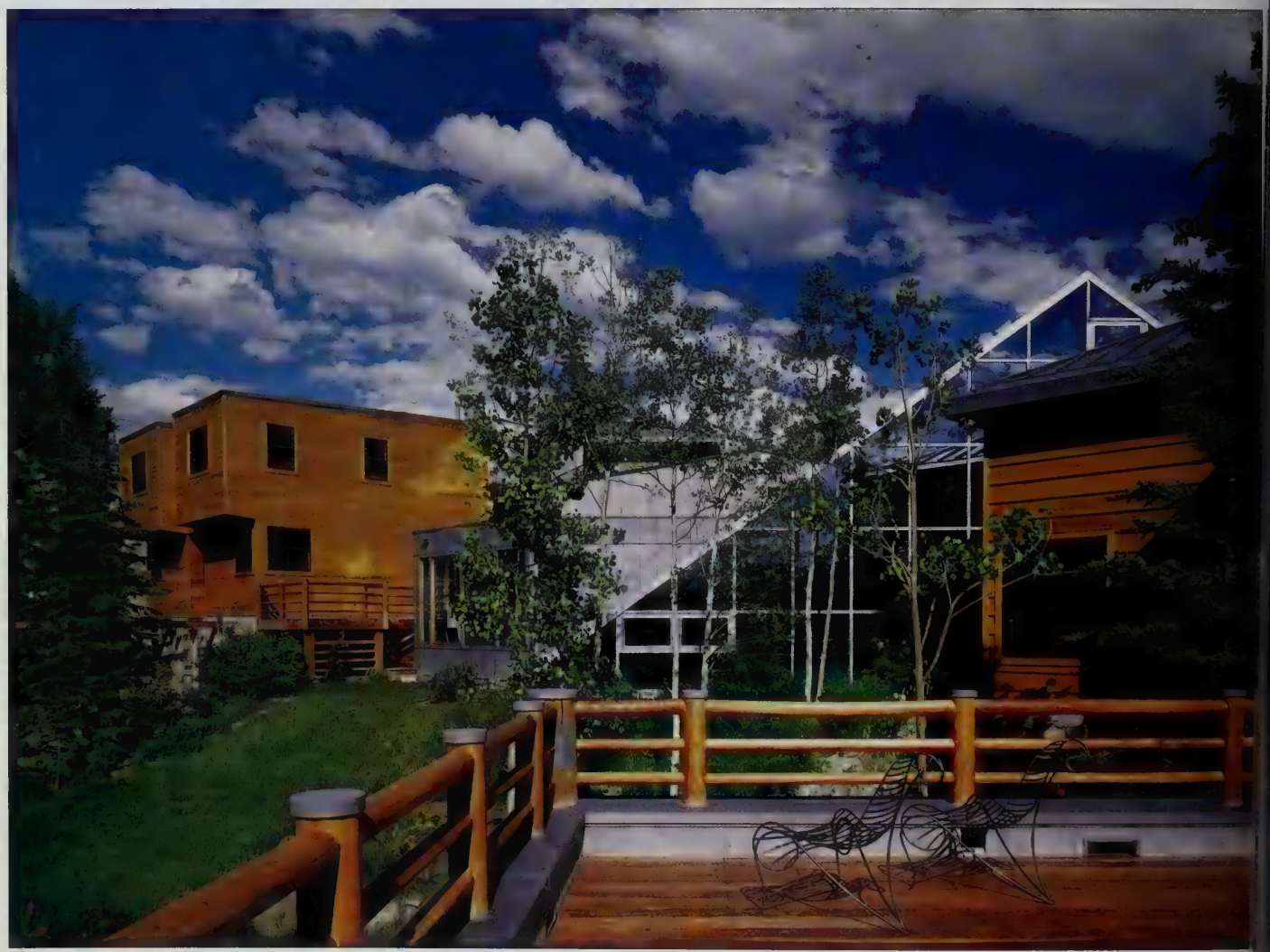
The harlequin diamonds soon disappeared, and the entrance hall's floor was relaid. The spacious living room now has a cream, blue and gold Ushak carpet and sofas, chairs and pillows covered in pale fabrics; its walls have been repainted a creamy vanilla. The shelves, on which the spongeware collection is displayed, were repainted a

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AN ASPEN RENAISSANCE

EUROPEAN THEMES REINTERPRETED FOR THE AMERICAN WEST

Architecture by Horacio Ravazzani/Interior Design by Sills Huniford Associates
Text by Judith Thurman/Photography by Durston Saylor



When James and Betsy Fifield decided to build a house in Aspen, he was still the chief executive of EMI's music division, and they lived a multicoastal life, with residences in California, New York and London. His heart, however, was in Colorado, where he had spent his childhood, and they were both passionate skiers. Fifield told his wife that he wanted to commission "a legacy in the mountains: something glamorous, important and original that would be in our family for generations." She, an artist with a background in contemporary design, took up what proved to be a daunting executive challenge: "I set out to realize Jim's vision of paradise."

Last year the music mogul, who has a virile appetite for adventure, traded one kind of hard rock for another. He became the CEO of The North Face and relocated his company's headquarters to the pristine valley town of Carbondale, thirty-five minutes by motorcycle (Jim Fifield's commuter vehicle of preference) from his Aspen property—a thirty-acre site of heart-stopping beauty. The holiday refuge and future family heirloom was suddenly to be their year-round home.

There is, of course, nothing unusual about multimillion-dollar showplaces in America's best-heeled ski town. A new one seems to be finished every month, and if it is not filled with antlers, kilims and distressed leather, it has crystal chandeliers and malachite lap pools. The Fifield residence, however, is something unique in scope, detail and distinction:

ABOVE: In his design for the Aspen residence of Betsy and James Fifield, Uruguayan architect Horacio Ravazzani used "an alternate and irregular arrangement of volumes," he says. The glass pyramid, which bisects the length of the residence, is a greenhouse.

For the interiors, New York designers Stephen Sills and James Huniford "took a modernist approach, with references to the past," says Huniford. OPPOSITE: In the gallery, which has board-formed concrete walls, are an ancient Roman jar and a Portuguese mirror.





a 15,000-square-foot compound of Colorado stone, board-form concrete, greenhouse glass and African iroko wood, with furnishings that recall the moody Flemish palaces and Baroque hunting lodges of northern Europe. It is the product of an eminent if unlikely collaboration between Uruguayan architect Horacio Ravazzani, whose austere modern houses first captured Betsy Fifield's admiration in the pages of this magazine, and New York–based interior designers Stephen Sills and James Huniford, who are famous for their subtle grandeur.

"I put together an extraordinary team," says Betsy Fifield with just pride. "We hired Horacio after the first interview. We loved his idiom, but to some degree the design was a surprise. I hadn't imagined a two-hundred-foot gallery or a greenhouse for tropical flowers among the pines at eight thousand feet. When the plans came in, I realized that the scale of the project required designers of commensurate imagination, and that meant Stephen and Ford, who were involved practical-

ABOVE: The imposing stepped gallery, which follows the gradations of the mountain, acts as the spine of the house, linking rooms on three levels. "It's not just used as a hall," Sills notes. "We created several different seating areas, and they get a lot of use."

RIGHT: "The Fifields said they wanted the house to be 'castle-like,'" says Sills. For the double-height living room, he and Huniford chose late-Renaissance-style pieces, including a pair of 17th-century Dutch chandeliers and a 17th-century-style Flemish mirror.









LEFT: Animated by an undulating wood ceiling, the screening room is "more fun," Sills says. In keeping with the lighter tone, the designers furnished the space with a circa 1940 French folding screen, ottomans upholstered in cowhide and a silk taffeta curtain.



James and Betsy Fifield (right) "both love antiques," Sills says. "In the city they had Biedermeier, but in Aspen we used robust, masculine furniture because the house can take it." ABOVE: The guest bedroom "is a mix of European furnishings and American comfort."

"WE WANTED TO REINVENT A SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY AESTHETIC THAT HAS, FOR SO LONG, BEEN UNFASHIONABLE."



ly from the beginning, planning the décor from blueprints and floor plans."

The Fifields, says Sills, "gave us an opportunity to create an American country château of sober splendor on a princely scale. The refinement of the interior architecture makes a dramatic counterpoint to the more rustic beauty of the structure that contains it. We're known for our modernist approach to classicism, but here we wanted to reinvent a seventeenth-century aesthetic that has, for so long, been unfashionable."

The Fifield house was designed both for large-scale entertaining and for the intimate life of a family with three children, one still very young. The greenhouse, a glass pyramid lushly planted with orchids and bougainvillea, serves as both a breakfast room and a banquet hall. It divides the guest wing and Betsy Fifield's painting studio (she will have her first show of watercolors next year, in Aspen) from the main structure. Sills and Huniford, who often draw their inspiration from old-master paintings, have given each of the small guest suites the chastened richness of an interior from Vermeer.

The formal rooms on the first floor open to the gallery —an "interior street," as Sills calls it—with heated floors of moss-green slate and walls of board-form concrete. It is arranged for living and conversation—not just for passage—with sofas, tapestries,

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ABOVE: "The master bath resembles a wonderful sitting room," Sills says. "We offset the modernism of the room with strong individual elements—dueling tubs, Moroccan tile, a Dutch settee." Insect motifs —"a subtle but magical detail"— are cast into the plaster walls.

RIGHT: Moroccan tiles extend into the master bedroom. "We wanted pattern and vibrant colors as well as hard surfaces for the floors," says Sills. "It's like an Italian palazzo." The tester bed is English; the 1820 wrought iron torchère is Italian. Henry Calvin bed fabrics.







Architecture by Carl Falck, RIBA
Interior Design by Monika Apponyi
Text by Elizabeth Lambert
Photography by Andrew Twort

FOLLOWING THE MEWS IN LONDON

CONVERTING A HUMBLE GRANARY INTO A SMART AND STYLISH RESIDENCE

Not much is known about the little building hidden away in a cobblestone London courtyard. Its irregular five-sided shape suggests it was built on a sliver of leftover land, but nobody bothered to record what purpose it served.

In the neighborhood are nineteenth-century carriage houses and stables, and a house across the courtyard has a broad low staircase once used for leading horses up to stables. Opinion has it that the building was a granary to supply the stables and that the tall front window was used for hoisting in the sacks.

At some point the granary became a rooming house, and around the turn of the century the spaces were divided again. The rooms became apartments with grand arched windows, but the building was so shabby it escaped the eye of architectural historians. Pigeons moved in, but most people continued to pass by the relic of London's village days. Not everyone, though. One woman loves to walk around London and see what is being done to houses—the indignities, the kindnesses. She passes houses that have been redecorated too often, and she hears the old walls groan-

"The house had been unloved for so long, I expect the walls are still wondering what happened to them," says the owner of an old London mews house. Architect Carl Falck created a double-height living room by raising the floor and ceiling and added a mezzanine.



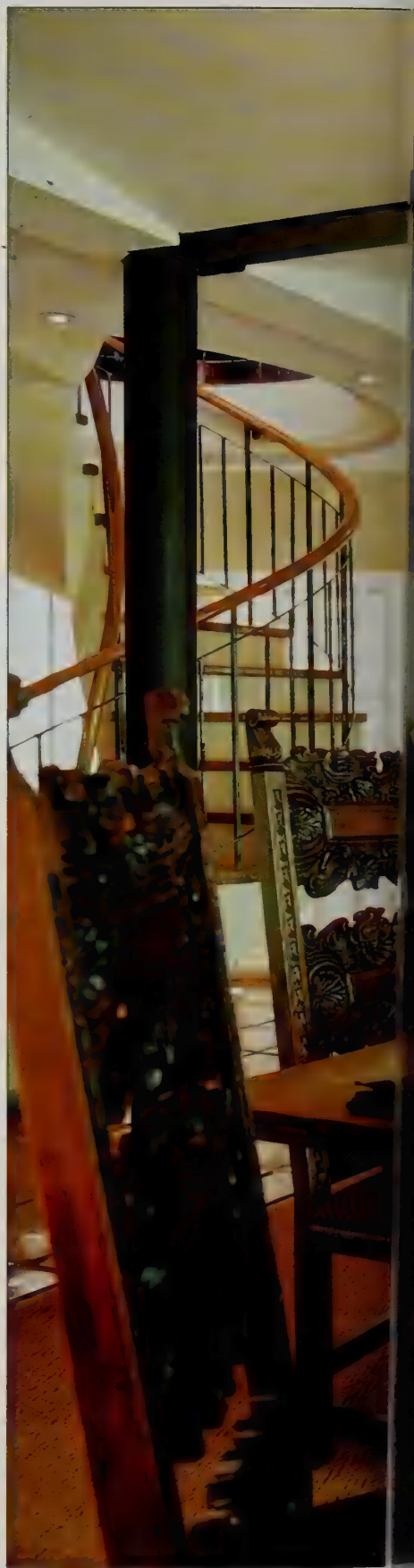
"The client and I love textures," says designer Monika Apponyi (above). "Velvet and linen give a feel of luxury without being glitzy."

ing for mercy as the builders return. "But not this house," she says. "This one cried out for help. I had just bought a place in the country and needed something smaller in London. Here was a treasure. Work started, and the cry from these walls seemed to be, 'Thank God for that. And about time, too.'"

Architect Carl Falck turned two stories into three by digging down to make new rooms in what had been a basement, and he altered interior levels by raising a ceiling to make a double-height living room with a mezzanine gallery. He replaced rotting joists and cast-iron columns with steel columns supporting a vaulted concrete ceiling, put down oak floorboards reclaimed from a bridge designed by Brunel, added a fireplace as a focal point for the long living room, had the walls covered with a finish of marble dust scraped into fresh plaster to give the impression of travertine and built a spiral staircase. "There had been an old light shaft deep in the heart of the building, and I wanted to mark it somehow," he says. "That led to thoughts of a spiral staircase to cut through all the levels, just as the light had once done."

He designed a new entrance hall with York stone floors because "I wanted to give the feeling that this was now a house," he says. "A door opens at an angle, and the living room is revealed only gradually. It's all to do with doling out the surprises slowly for maximum im-





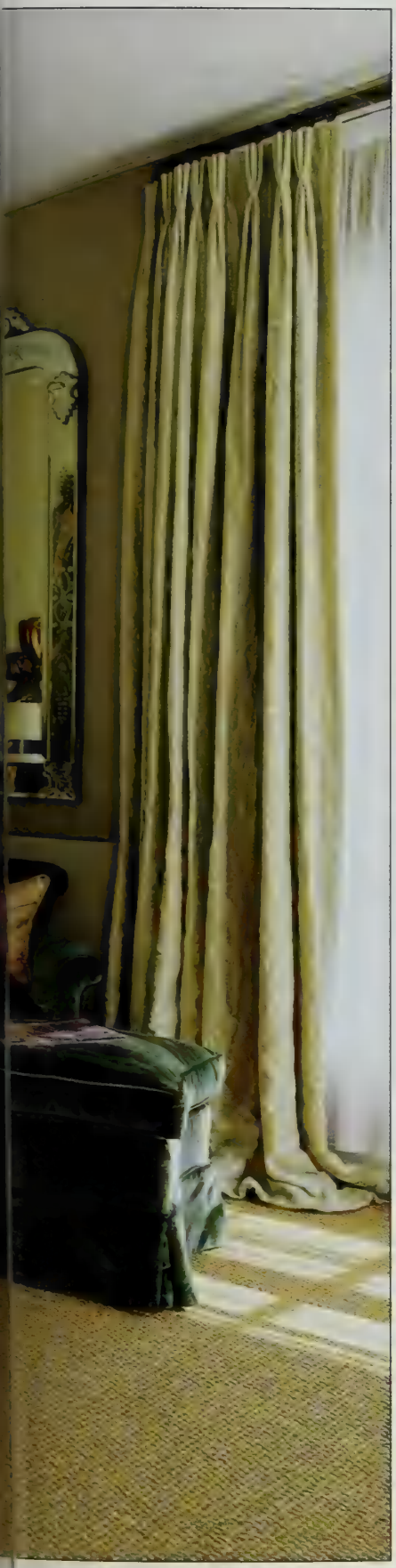
ABOVE: "The hall is reminiscent of a country house, with stone floors and a Holbein-style mirror," says Falck. "The pivot door leads into a low space below the mezzanine, and then the drama of the living room unfolds." The walls were covered in fabric and the door in leather.



A spiral staircase descends to the dining room, once the basement, where light filters in through a high window and the glass blocks in the pantry. The center panel above the oak cabinets is retractable, allowing the room to be opened up to the kitchen.

"Anyone who has been to Italy always wants to bring a bit of it back," says the owner, who returned with Baroque doors that form the master bedroom's headboard. "We juxtaposed that with the calm and neutral soft gray-green wall fabric," adds Apponyi.







BELOW: "The powder room was a plain white modern shell," says Apponyi. "I thought we could go a little mad and create a Gothic folly." She lined the walls with a fabric based on an old tapestry and used a Gothic motif "for its quirkiness and interest" for the furnishings.

pact. The important thing was to create drama, but I understand that a modern space can be difficult to inhabit. The client had wonderful antiques. She needed someone who could bring those in and design rooms where she could feel comfortable. She needed to personalize the house, give it her identity. It was time to hand it on to a decorator."

The client called on Countess Monika Apponyi of MM Design, an Austrian designer who moved to London in the late seventies and established her reputation by winning awards at British interior design show houses. "Those exhibition rooms followed me for years," she says. "Everyone wanted me to do the same rooms for them. I would get forty requests and turn them all down. This client never asked me to repeat anything. We just sat down and started to talk. She writes poetry and has a poetic feeling about the intangible atmosphere of a house."

They talked about proportions. "The house had inherited a crazy set of proportions," says Apponyi. "The tall windows in the living room don't match, and there's a narrow space between them with room only for a tiny fireplace. The living room begged for grandeur; the humble origins of the building dictated something simpler. Reduced grandeur became our definition of the right atmosphere."

They talked about the need for calm and about the subtle differences of achieving that in town and in the country. "A country house can borrow tranquillity from outside, can pick up on everything around it," says the client. "A

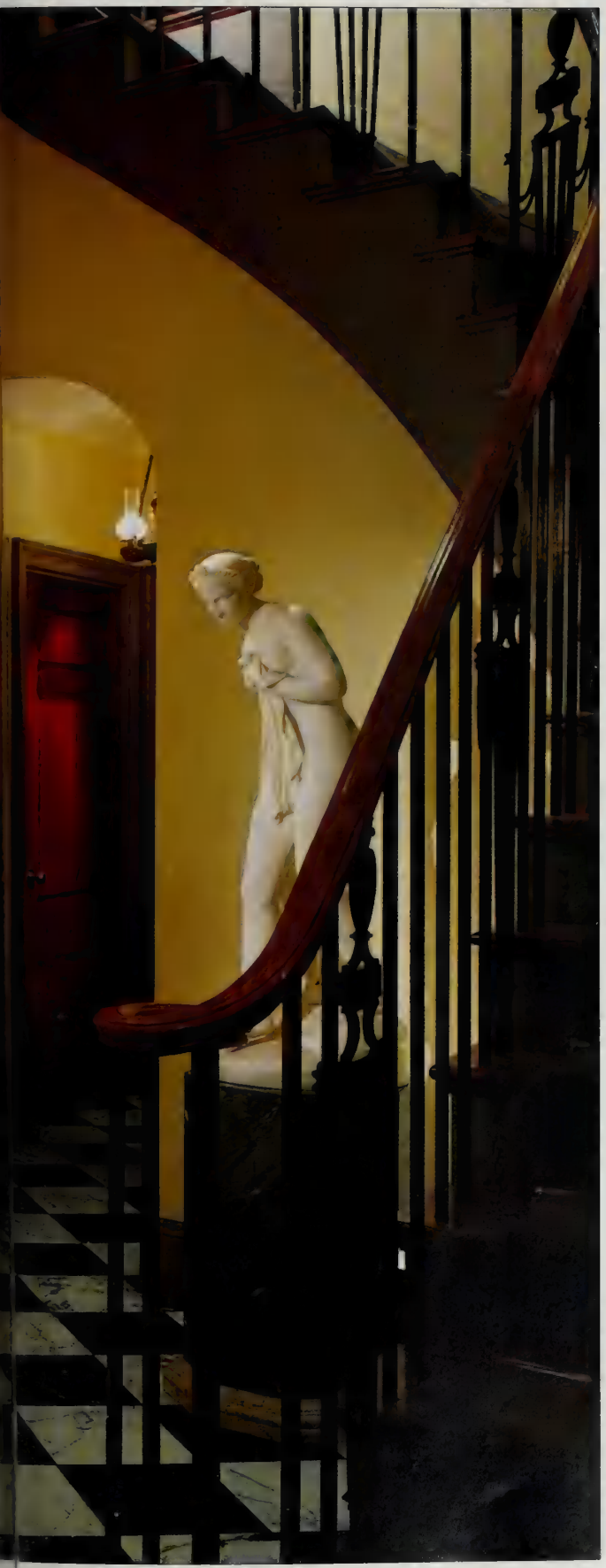
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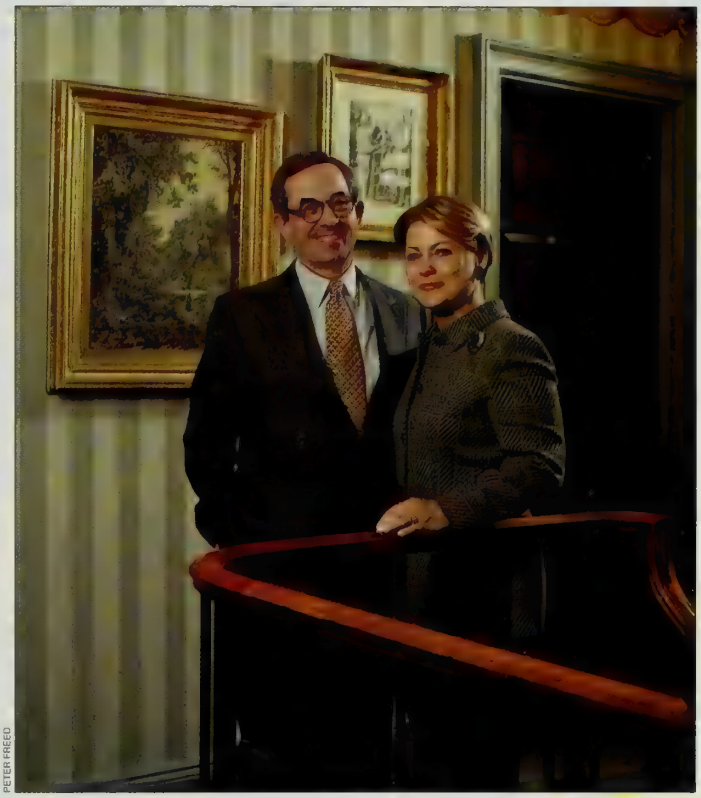
"THE LIVING ROOM BEGGED FOR GRANDEUR; THE HUMBLE ORIGINS DICTATED SOMETHING SIMPLER."

AMERICAN BEAUTIES



SUE AND STUART FELD'S REMARKABLE COLLECTION OF ART AND ANTIQUES FILLS THEIR MANHATTAN APARTMENT





PETER FRIED

Sue Feld and her husband, Stuart Feld, president and director of Hirschl & Adler Galleries (above), wanted their Manhattan apartment to be "warm, with a museum flavor," he says. LEFT: *Proserpine*, 1839, a bust by Hiram Powers, faces circa 1827 George Catlin *Views of Niagara Falls* oils in the entrance hall.

Combining one of the country's greatest collections of American Neoclassical furniture and decorative objects with an equally stellar collection of American paintings, drawings and sculpture, and installing it all in one of New York's grandest buildings, is actually something of a risk. If you aren't careful, you can end up with stodgy period rooms fit only for costumed mannequins and lecturing docents. If you are Stuart Feld, president and director of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, and his wife, Sue, however, you use those ingredients to create a relaxed ambience in which the rare, the exquisite and the historically important can feel at home.

In a tour de force of nineteenth-century craftsmanship and twentieth-century charm, rooms furnished almost entirely with museum-quality furniture, lamps, silver and porcelain fashioned between 1810 and 1830 have been made accessible and welcoming. The visitor is steeped in the elegant, optimistic atmosphere of a young America and surrounded by the best the nation produced, without being afraid to sit down and enjoy it.

There is much to enjoy. The years 1810 to 1830 were the heyday of Duncan Phyfe,

Text by Ann E. Berman
Photography by Scott Frances



Gathering Autumn Leaves, 1875, by J. G. Brown hangs above the living room's circa 1825 Egyptian marble mantel. Standing at far right is a labeled Duncan Phyfe secretary-bookcase. Sofa silk damask from Clarence House. Brunschwig & Fils medallion chair fabric, foreground.

Charles-Honoré Lannuier and a host of other noted American cabinetmakers and designers. Borrowing from Greek and Roman classicism and working with rich woods and ormolu mounts in the shape of eagles, dolphins and caryatids, these masters created furniture that is opulent yet restrained, sophisticated yet very American in its outlook. The same aesthetic produced memorable examples in silver and porcelain, and the era was characterized by exciting technical innovations in lighting.

Although avidly sought after by today's museums and collectors, Neoclassicism was eschewed well into the sixties in favor of the more familiar Chippendale and Queen Anne styles. But Stuart Feld, an iconoclastic young art historian specializing in the then unheard-of field of American painting, disregarded the tastes of the multitude. In the late fifties he began to buy every piece of fine Neoclassical furniture he could find.

"In those days no dealer specialized in the period," he recalls, "but that didn't bother me. I loved the objects, and I liked the challenge of collecting in an area that wasn't popular. I wanted to be a part of figuring out all about it."

The rest of the collecting community was conveniently slow to catch on. Feld remembers that in 1967 a dealer sent him a photograph of an elegant fall-front desk made by Duncan Phyfe around 1830 with an elaborately grained mahogany veneer, a piece identical to one now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The price was three hundred



BELOW: A sofa possibly made by Duncan Phyfe around 1815 stands in the living room beneath an 1868 portrait of two children by James C. Platt. The circa 1815 table at right is the only known center table by Charles-Honoré Lannuier. *The Fisher Boy* is a bust by Hiram Powers.

OPPOSITE: A French chandelier illuminates the dining room, where *Fishbowl Fantasy*, 1867, by Edward Goodes is exhibited above a New York pier-table-form sideboard, probably by Duncan Phyfe. The silver soup tureen and basket are by Thomas Fletcher.





ollars, but the dealer admitd: "I've heard that if you on't buy this, nobody else is kely to. I'll even give it to ou—just take it away." Feld adly paid the three hundred, nd the desk is now in his li-rary—one of three impornt Duncan Phyfe secretaries wned by the couple.

A similar story surrounds e acquisition of a monuental Philadelphia console ble with a specimen-marble top from about 1815. "I saw it in a shop in about 1968," says Stuart Feld, "and I thought it was the most wonderful object I'd ever seen, but I had nowhere to put it. Fortunately, the dealer was so happy to sell it that he let me store it in his gallery." After a stint at the White House, the console now graces the dining room, a perfect complement to a New York three-pedestal mahogany banquet table of about the same year and bird's-eye-maple chairs from about 1820.

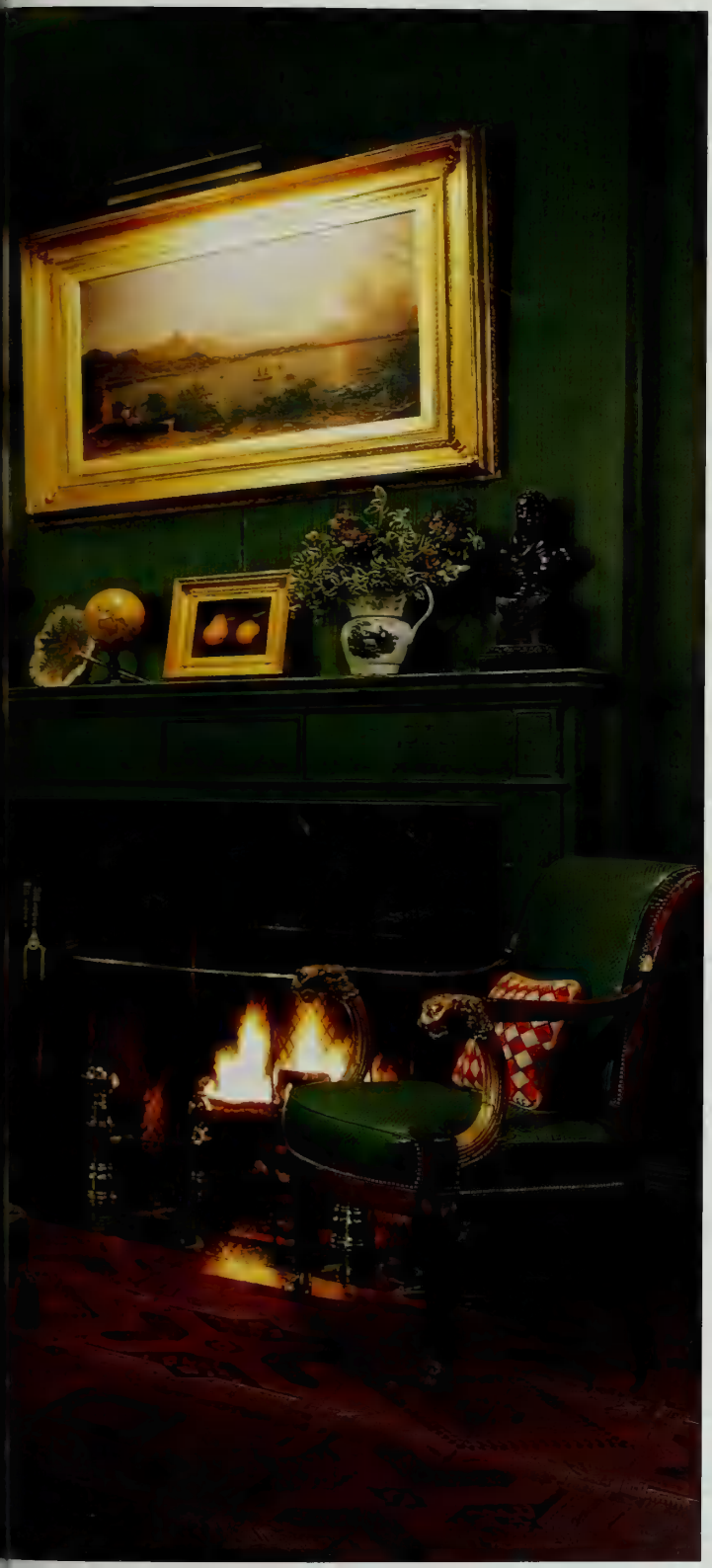
By 1979 the market for Neoclassicism had developed considerably, and the Feld collection was one of the best in the country. With so many objects to display and a young family to raise, the couple began looking for a larger apartment. They found it in a neo-Georgian 1930 Rosario Candela building—5,000 square feet of beautifully proportioned, high-ceilinged space. Husband and wife (Sue Feld is also an art historian) went right to work. He took one look at the living room and realized that, according to the laws of symmetry, there should be a set of mahogany doors in place of the shallow bookcase, to balance the doors on the other side of the fireplace. The doorway was uncovered, and the original doors were located in the



basement and reinstalled. She studied design books and haunted showrooms looking for borders, fabrics and floor-coverings to provide a suitable period background for the art and antiques. "There's every difference between decorating and collecting," says Sue Feld. "For instance, we could have put textured lacquer on the library walls, but we went with a plain green strié paper instead. It should always be the art that you see—not the wall."

The overall colors of red, green and gold on the first floor of the apartment were "a given," she notes. "Those are appropriate period colors." The arrangement of the furniture is a slightly different story. Because of the symmetrical nature of Neoclassical design, some placements were obvious—a pair of circa

The library's collection of American art includes works by Eastman Johnson, William Sidney Mount, J. G. Brown and George Henry Hal *The Harbor at Rio de Janeiro*, right was painted by Martin Johnson Heade in 1864. The armchair is mo eled after a Jacob of Paris design.



BELOW: A circa 1815 American four-poster dominates the master bedroom. Hanging above the fall-front desk, attributed to Duncan Phyfe, is *Trailing Arbutus*, 1860, by Martin Johnson Heade. At left is *Vase of Pink and White Laurel*, 1874, by George Henry Hall. Stark carpet.



1818 Boston console tables, each topped with a Federal mirror from about 1815, on either side of a living room window, for example—but the Felds were not about to follow all the rules.

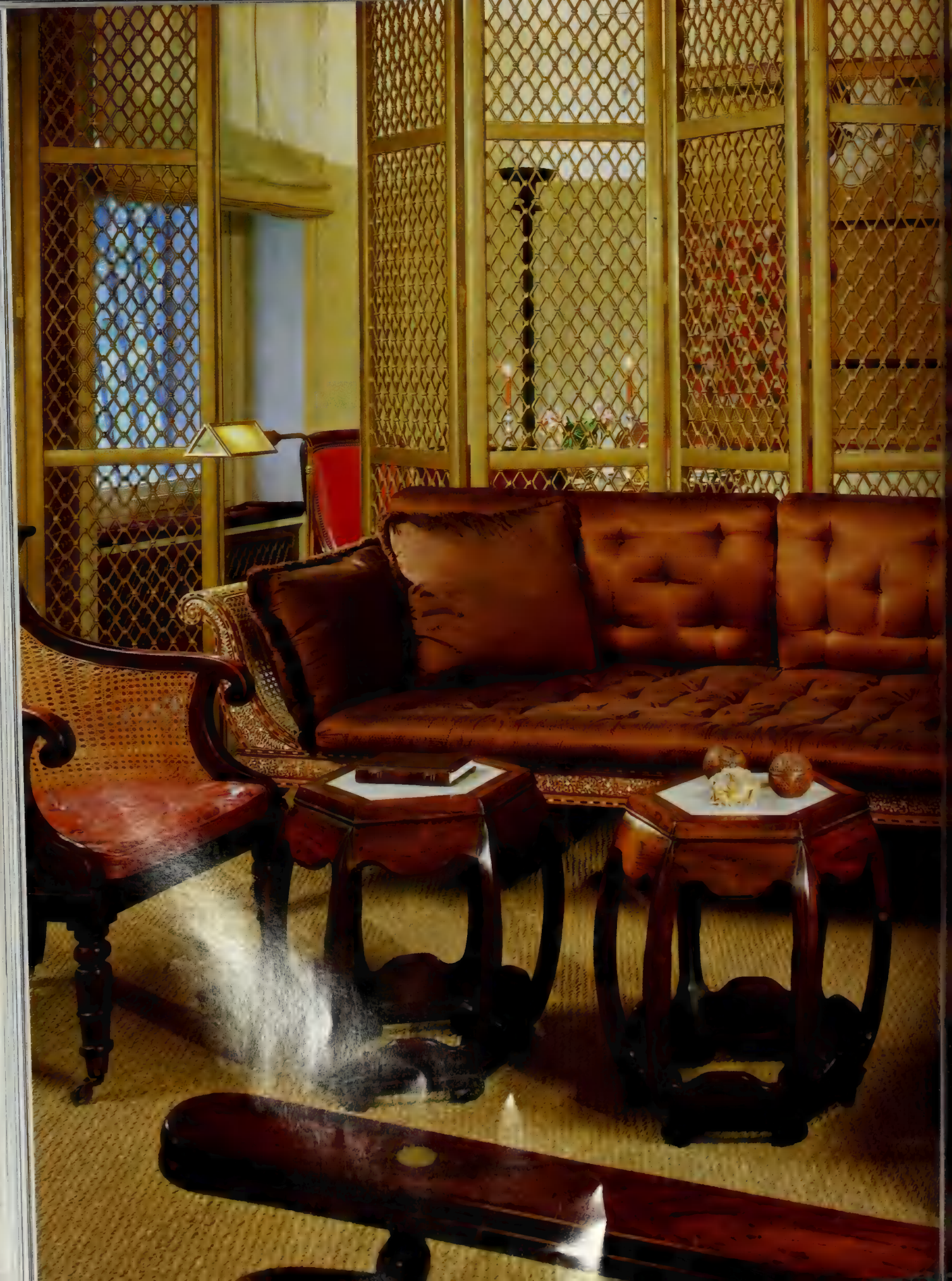
"An 1820s room would have been much emptier, with one center table and the rest of the furniture hugging the walls," Sue Feld explains, gesturing at a comfortable grouping around the living room's Egyptian marble mantel. "You wouldn't want to live in it." The couple own the only known center table made by Lannuier, but here, supported by carved and gilded winged caryatids, it has become an elegant side piece. "This apartment is a twentieth-century confection," continues Sue Feld, "right down to the orderly way we've 'stacked' the pictures on the walls—it would never have been that way in the 1820s."

Another difference is that almost all of the Felds' American paintings date to the third quarter of the nineteenth century. "Between 1810 and 1830 American painting was still largely portraiture," Stuart Feld points out. "Besides, we want to live with what we love—still lifes, American Pre-Raphaelite works, genre pictures, Hudson River landscapes—examples culled from forty years of collecting. Like the furniture, these works are all loosely part of a nineteenth-century American Romantic tradition, so everything fits together."

Displaying it all, however, took meticulous planning, particularly in the library, where dense, artfully lit groupings cover the walls. "Before we moved in, Stuart and I made cardboard mock-ups of each picture," says Sue Feld. "We spent many a night moving them around in each room, getting the composition right, then organizing the proper wiring so every picture could have its own light." While *The Harbor at Rio de Janeiro*, 1864, one of the most famous images by Martin Johnson Heade, hangs in solitary splendor over the library fireplace, gemlike works by William Trost Richards, Sanford Robinson Gifford, Worthington Whittredge and others are closely arranged—like a bank of windows opening onto our nation's bucolic past.

For a more graphic, intimate view of this same terrain, visitors climb the stairs to the second floor, where one of the most important private collections of American drawings in the United States hangs in rooms and hallways, protected from the sun. The couple own some two hundred works from the mid-eighteenth cen-

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Interior Design by Verde Visconti
Text by William Weaver
Photography by Robert Reck

INSIDE AN ITALIAN JEWEL BOX

WARM COLORS AND THEATRICAL NOTES SHAPE INTIMATE ROOMS



"Worlds meet here," Verde Visconti says of the interiors she created for an Italian businessman. LEFT: She designed a latticed room divider to define the living and dining areas. ABOVE: The client's Edo-period screens inspired the apartment's exotic décor.

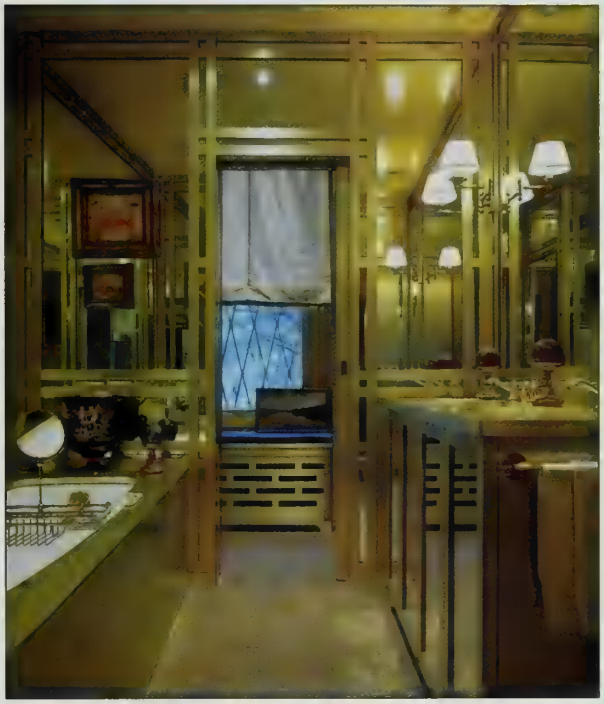
Verde Visconti is from an ancient family whose roots dig deep into Italian history. But the family can also boast many modern achievements, especially in the arts. Her father was a respected painter, her mother was an internationally successful couturier, and her cousin Luchino Visconti was one of Italy's great directors, equally applauded in the theater, in films and in opera. When Visconti was a little girl, her aunt used to take her to Cousin Luchino's afternoon rehearsals, and she was captivated by the inventive unreality of the theater.

"I remember sitting in the Teatro Eliseo in Rome for a rehearsal of Rampini's *L'Impresario delle Smirne*," she says. "There were lines strung





LEFT: In the bedroom, a late-18th-century Neapolitan-style bed with a silk canopy lends a sense of intimacy to the small space. An 18th-century watercolor of a leopard hangs above a contemporary sculpture by Arturo Martini. The dyed-straw wallcovering is from China.



ABOVE: Visconti enhanced the narrow master bath with reflective surfaces such as mirrors and gold-toned strapwork. The scagliola spheres are 18th-century Roman; on the tub is an Apulian red-figured krater. A sea-grass carpet extends throughout the apartment.

across the stage, with sheets hanging from them. The sheets were stirring in a breeze —I thought it was real wind —and I was spellbound." The spell endures: Visconti is still charmed by the theater, by its colors and deceits.

A dark, anonymous apartment in the old center of an Italian city required the architect-designer to draw on all of her theatrical instincts. The busy owner wanted a place where he could live quietly but where he could entertain as well, for he is a pivotal figure in local and international intellectual life. He is also a collector, and he needed a context that complemented the antiques.

Visconti is a friend of the client's and had worked on several projects with him in the past. She was given a blank canvas, but thanks to a stroke of luck, just as she was preparing to begin her work, the client discovered a pair of superb objects that were to determine the whole décor. "In an apartment like this," Visconti explains, "I need something—an object, a work of art—on which I can base my design, something that establishes the character of the place."

These acquisitions were two complementary Japanese screens from the early Edo period. Before placing these impressive pieces in the apartment, Visconti and her client supervised the demolition of a wall that had

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TAILOR-MADE FOR MANHATTAN

A FASHION EXECUTIVE'S APARTMENT IS PARED DOWN AND SPRUCED UP

Interior Design by Bray-Schaible/Text by Michael Frank
Photography by Scott Frances



"I wanted something minimalist but not stark," says a Manhattan fashion executive who asked Robert Bray and Michael Schaible to remodel his apartment. Crisp lines define the entrance hall and set the tone for the rest of the space. The living room cabinet was custom-made.





Consider the client's dressing room, described in his own words: "My pants are organized by fabric, color and weight: They go from tropical worsted wools, light to dark; to flannels, light to dark; to heavy cottons, light to dark; to wool crepes, light to dark; to linens, light to dark. Sweaters are divided by fabric—cotton, heavy-gauge cotton, fine-gauge cotton—and then by silhouette: two-button placket, cardigan, turtleneck, zip neck. Then there are the shirts. . . ."

"We took our cue from his relentless organizing," says Robert Bray, who with partner Michael Schaible reinvented an apartment in lower Manhattan for an executive at a major American fashion house. "We get someone this obsessive about once every ten years. It tells you a lot. You need order, discipline, a lack of excessive detail. Whatever you do must be very clear. If there's a problem, you can't just cover it up with some ivy."

Interior design as bespoke tailoring, with all the confidence, rigor and subtle expertise that the sartorial comparison suggests: This is scarcely an approach Bray and Schaible would take with every project. "We would only do something this controlled for a very specific person," Schaible points out. "Many people would walk into this apartment and ask, 'Where do you put the newspaper?' Our client says, 'You read it, then throw it away.'"

Bray, Schaible, their associate, Mitchell Turnbough, and the client agreed instantly on how best to tackle the design of a space whose original incarnation Bray calls "spectacularly mediocre." The apartment is part of a complex built in 1948 that is famous for the level of its custodial—one might almost say curatorial—care, except that the architecture being so lovingly preserved is, accord-





ABOVE: In the living room, the designers opted for settees. "No one likes the middle seat on a sofa," says Schaible. Black carpeting throughout creates drama and contrast. On the wall is Richard Giglio's *Word Painting*, 1997. Ottoman leather from Edelman.

ing to Bray, "as dull as any second-rate apartment you walk into in this city." It does, however, come with what in Manhattan amounts to a long and touching legacy: The client has lived there almost consistently since he was eleven years old. "New Yorkers, whether they own or rent, seldom feel that their apartment is quite theirs," he remarks. "But this place is all I've ever known. When I put my key in the door, I'm home."

Home in spirit and by association; certainly no longer when it comes to design. The interiors the client grew up in were fitted with heavy furniture and gold shag carpet. Although the rooms had since been somewhat updated, they still needed a thorough rethinking. "People can have terrific taste generally but be unable to pull their apartments together to save their lives," Bray says. "It's the whole question of knowing how to make something

ABOVE: The client's collection of Gallé vases rests on a custom-designed multipurpose table that anchors the room. "It's the one place where decorative objects are allowed—even encouraged—to move around," says Schaible. The photographs are by Hajime Watanabe.

"YOU HAVE TO BE ABSURDLY DETAIL-ORIENTED," ROBERT BRAY SAYS, "TO MAKE AN APARTMENT LIKE THIS WORK."



RIGHT: Associate Mitchell Turnbough transformed a small bedroom into a dressing room, where velvet draperies conceal racks and shelves. "For the first time in my life, I'm one hundred percent organized," the client says. The chair is Gothic Revival.



function twenty-four hours a day and striking a balance between the glamorous and the practical."

Balance, in fact, is what informs these interiors. In an environment with limited square footage and minimal embellishment, there must be a careful articulation of architectural elements, a certain rhythm among the pieces of furniture, and lighting that is both warm and timeless.

The designers refrained from making major structural changes, although they did mask the original metal doorframes with drywall, and they replaced standard-issue closet doors with slabs of black-lacquered wood. The same black lacquer, joined with maple, reappears in the surface-mounted cabinets in the living room, which were designed by Turnbough.

Lighting lent further unity to the room. Both table and standing lamps, all in a style as pared down as possible, were designed so that their heights are identical. "You have to be absurdly detail-oriented," Bray says, "to make an apartment like this work."

Anchoring the space is a large table, in the same maple as the cabinets, that Bray-Schaible designed after what Bray remembered was a piece by Jean-Michel Frank but later found out he had misinterpreted. Tables are the designer's single favorite type of furniture; he works, eats and reads at a substantial one himself, and he likes to make tables the centerpiece, if not actually the center, of a room. Why, then, are there no chairs in evidence? "To imply the use of this table, which is for everything," Bray replies. "When the client entertains, a kind of

continued on page 188

The prevailing symmetry and sense of precision extend to the bedroom, where the height of the headboard matches that of the chairs. The lamps, in powder-coated steel, were designed by Bray-Schaible. Ralph Lauren bedding; chairs and ottoman from Donghia.

HOTELS

VILLAS DELUXE

THE PENINSULA BEVERLY HILLS REVAMPS ITS PRIVATE LUXURY SUITES WITH CALIFORNIA COLOR

Interior Design by Darrell Schmitt, ASID
Text by Nancy Collins/Photography by Mary E. Nichols



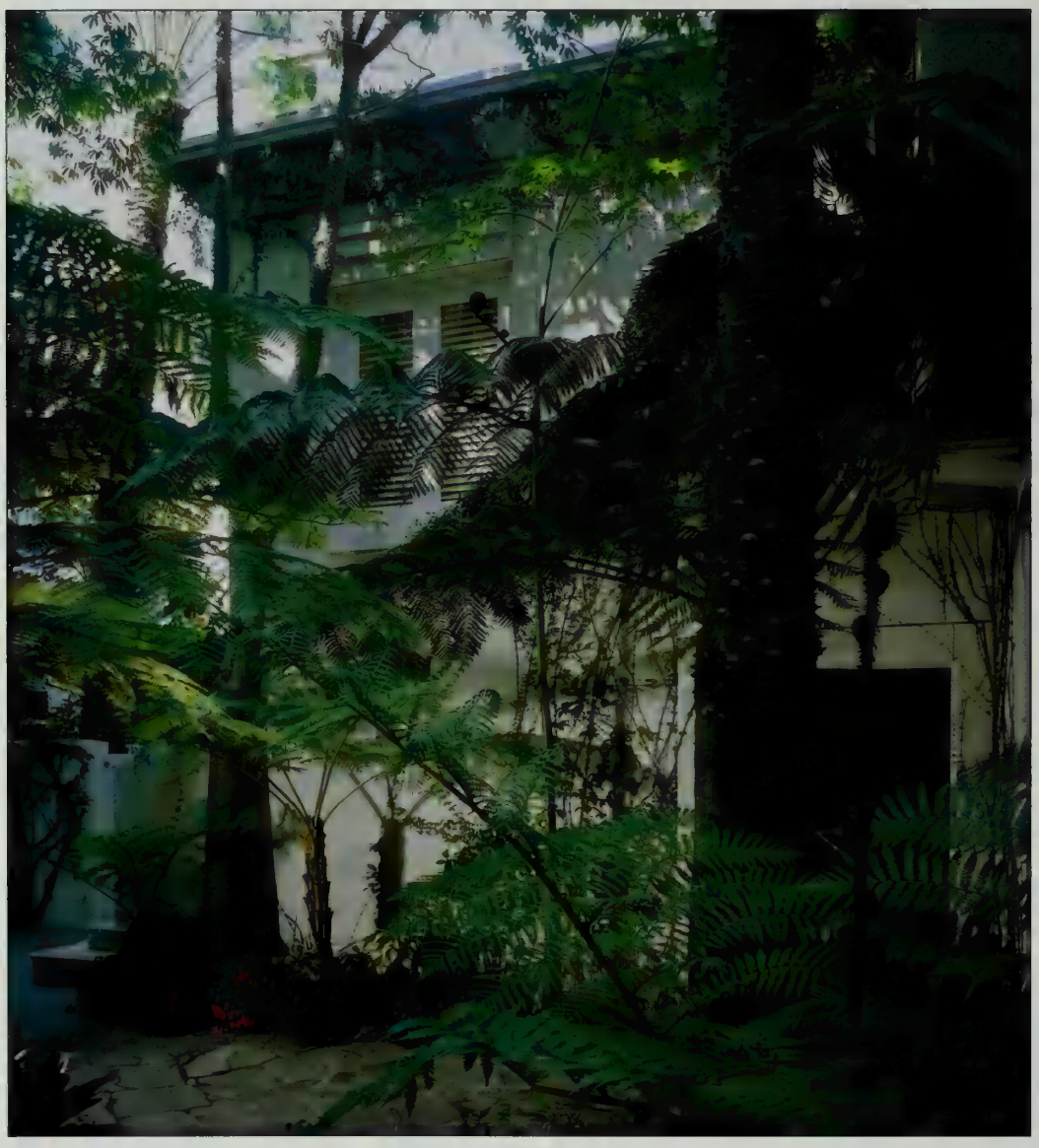


The first time was with Michael Douglas. He said he was better in the morning, so why didn't we do it then? Though strictly a nonmorning kind of gal myself, I gave in. "Why not? Where?" "At the Peninsula. In my villa." "The Peninsula has villas? Since when?" "Since always." Who knew?

At the crack of nine the next morning I was knocking on the door of one of Los Angeles's best-kept secrets—the Villas at the Peninsula, sixteen homes away from home but with room service, nestled in back of the Peninsula Beverly Hills hotel. When Michael appeared to

ABOVE: The Peninsula Beverly Hills hotel recently renovated its private villas. RIGHT: "The intent was to give them a discreet, residential feel," designer Darrell Schmitt says. Lee Jofa living room sofa. Sofa and yellow pillow fabrics, Brunschwig & Fils. Aga John rug. Drexel desk.







ABOVE: Palm trees, ferns, vines and magnolias line the paths that lead from the hotel to the 16 villas. "The landscaping creates a sense of privacy in a lush setting," says general manager Ali Kasikci. LEFT: A small private villa patio has a whirlpool.

let me in—I was there to *interview* him for *Vanity Fair*—he led me into a two-bedroom cottage complete with living room, dining room, kitchen, whirlpool, terrace and total privacy. That a Peninsula aficionado like myself, who had spent many nights on one of its five floors, knew nothing about these bungalows says a lot about the low-key way the high-energy hotel is run.



But that was three years ago. And, alas, time marches on, even for an edifice. Kept under wraps though they may have been, these hideaways of the busy, discreet and discerning recently did what everybody else in Beverly Hills does: got a face-lift.



"In the eight years since we opened, we have positioned ourselves as a very efficient, luxury business hotel," explains general manager Ali Kasikci, who joined the Peninsula six months after it opened its doors in August 1991. "Now we want to soften the edges with the spa, the gardens, the villas. And since I was never very comfortable with the villas—their color, design, everything—we decided to change them."

Which indeed he has, sprucing up what were already some pretty swank digs. Which is where I come in. Again. Only this time I'm not visiting a villa, I'm sleeping in it, having flown in from New York for a fast four-day, three-night business trip. Because I'll be reporting two magazine stories as well as shooting a television inter-

"It's an updated traditional style rendered in fresh, saturated California colors," Schmitt says of a bedroom. Drapery and bed fabric, Quadrille. Love seat from Lee Jofa, with fabric by Brunschwig & Fils. Pillow fabric, Old World Weavers. Frette bed linens and bathrobe.



view, I need to hit the ground running, phoning and faxing. I need a hotel that can not only keep up with me but anticipate what I need.

"We operate on the motto, Absence of discomfort," explains Kasikci, an engaging Turk who speaks in exclamation points. "Our guests pay us to eliminate the discomfort from their lives. We don't want you to think about your phone messages, your Federal Express, your dry cleaning. You should be concentrating on the success of your business, not thinking about when to check in and out."

Which is one of the first pluses about the Peninsula: no official checkout time. You sign in or out depending on

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"The hotel has the urban scale of Paris," says Kasikci. On the fifth-floor swimming pool deck, which has views of Century City, are cabanas equipped with television sets and surrounded by topiary, a rose arbor, olive trees and geraniums. Brown Jordan pool furniture.

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motel, though there has surely never in history been a motel as exquisitely detailed, as beautifully made or as grandly scaled as this one.

The most compelling aspect of the design, however, is the shape of the house itself, which, ironically, came from Meier's response to the frustration of dealing with the community's restrictive building code. Instead of fighting the demand that he create a pitched roof, he made one in reverse—rather than being shaped like an A, the roof is shaped like a V, with a valley instead of a peak. The V is not symmetrical, however; the roof is highest along the water side of the house, which is the main façade, and lower facing the street. As in many of Meier's houses, the most prominent façade is the side oriented toward a major landscape feature, not the entrance. The house shows a guarded, private side to the street and opens up generously in the rear.

"In an urban situation, you would want the public side to be the street façade," says Meier. "But here the inland waterway really is a kind of public street, and therefore the house is oriented toward it."

If the house recalls such classic Meier designs as the Douglas House and the Smith House in the grandeur with which it addresses the water, the specifics of the Neugebauer House are altogether different. Where the earlier houses are elegant, intricate, asymmetrical compositions, the Neugebauer House is more formal, more ordered, more systematic and yet also more actively sculptural. The strongly horizontal, symmetrical façade consists of twelve equal bays—four containing the public rooms at one end, two containing the master suite in the middle, four containing the guest areas at the other end and two that have been left open as outdoor spaces flanking the master suite. Each bay (other than the open ones) consists of a precisely repeated rhythm of glass windows and doors at the bottom and glass covered by slatted brise-soleils above, while the projecting roof flies out above it all.

The geometries of this house are far more regularized than in most Meier houses, and the form of the roof stands in splendid counterpoint to it—not quite a squiggle set against the grid but a sculptural presence whose power is enhanced by its contrast to the mass of the house. The design is very much Meier's own and has no real precedent, yet it is hard not to see some connection to the modernism of the 1950s and 1960s, as if Meier, having worked his way through earlier Le Corbusier, has begun to look a little more closely at the late work of his master. The façade of the Neugebauer House owes more to Le Corbusier's High Court at Chandigarh than to the Villa Savoye.

Late Le Corbusier was often harsh, however; the architect's work of that period is sometimes thought of as the beginning of the modernist style known as the new brutalism. The Neugebauer House, though, is anything but brutal; its white-limestone exterior, crisply sloping roof and general effervescence suggest a luxurious serenity. The stark simplicity of the entrance façade, with its minimalist front stairway, and the reserved, sleek dignity of the waterfront side suggest that Meier is not without a certain debt to Mies van der Rohe—not to mention the architects of the so-called Sarasota School, among them Paul Rudolph, who practiced not so far from Naples in the early 1950s.

Meier's gift has always been to absorb modernist history and then make of it something new that pushes modernism in a direction that has almost invariably been exquisitely, shimmeringly beautiful. It is modernism made romantic and sensual, and sometimes a bit too beautiful to be touched. Here, the simplicity of the floor plan and the regularity of the geometries seem to have made Meier, paradoxically, a bit more relaxed. This is a formal house but not a grand or intimidating one. For all its monumentality, it is a pavilion writ large as much as it is a villa writ small.

> The design is very much Meier's own and has no real precedent.

And it is full of original things that appear nowhere else in Meier's work. The garage, a cylinder thirty-three feet in diameter, sits on the front lawn, a vast piece of minimalist sculpture, playing against both the street façade and the grid of palm trees Meier has placed in front of the house. (Without this cylinder in the front yard, the street side of the house would be considerably less compelling.) The brise-soleils and the extraordinary roof join together to create a glorious, richly textured three-dimensional composition that is unique in Meier's architecture. These elements yield rooms within the house that are more dynamic than most of Meier's interior spaces, thanks to the sharply sloping angle of the roof, and yet they tend also to be slightly more conventional than many Meier rooms, with neither the tight dimensions nor the sharp verticality that characterizes a number of the architect's interiors.

The rooms are white, as are almost all Meier interiors, but here they are defined less by their own walls than by the view every one of them possesses to the limestone terraces, with the long pools (both swimming and reflecting) that Meier has placed parallel to the house, and by the lawn and the inland waterway beyond. The furnishings, many of which were designed by Meier, are spare and comfortable; Meier and Cox have designed built-in cabinetry that is exquisitely detailed and striking in its restraint. Even the entrance area and the long corridor, which is marked by open vistas to the landscape at each end, are pleasant spaces, full of what Meier calls "the wonderful light of this place, light that changes and moves as you move through the space."

This is a house of purer, simpler order than most of Meier's buildings, and it has a distinctive kind of dignity to it, projecting a quiet confidence. What is relaxing here is the perfection of detail and the precision of the grid and the line, all of which appear not as hard-edged but as soothing. All architecture, of course, seeks to present an appearance of order to the world, to give us the comfort of believing that a chaotic and disordered world is, in fact, under control. But in Naples, Richard Meier has accomplished all of this in a new way, creating order with a whole new set of rhythmic, sculptural forms. □

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mirrors and sculpture. In the baronial living room, the iroko-wood ceilings are thirty feet high, and the focal point is a palace mirror in the seventeenth-century Flemish style. Its ebony frame would be suitable for a very large Rembrandt, but Betsy Fifield has decided she will not hang art there or elsewhere in the house because, she says, "it would detract from the monastic mood of the architecture."

What is most monkish, or, more precisely, abbeylike, about this great room is the symmetry of its furnishings and the rigor with which they have been edited. Sills and Huniford designed the ten-foot sofas, upholstered in suede, and a banquette in olive mohair. They enlivened the rather somber chiaroscuro of the interiors with richly textured antique fabrics, like the African chevron cloth that covers a Tudor-style English bench, and a rare French Gothic-style needlepoint rug in a Fabergé palette of pistachio, magenta and chartreuse. On one of their many shopping trips to Europe ("It's a lot of work," Huniford allows, "to fill a house this size"), the partners found a pair of seventeenth-century Dutch brass chandeliers that were "shockingly perfect in scale and presence" for the room. And they were gratified that their clients, who prefer to entertain by candlelight, decided not to have them electrified.

While most of the public rooms are on one level, there is an underground theater, a mezzanine office and a second-floor master suite of breathtaking and somewhat deceptive spareness. The floors in the stair hall, bedroom and bath have been laid with an intricate mosaic of Moroccan tile that was designed by Sills and Huniford and handmade in England. "Its strong geometry and color," Huniford notes, "help to balance the ceiling height and to enrich the coolness and simplicity of the furnishings." The Fifields "scavenged" the nineteenth-century marble tubs from a Roman junkyard, and their designers, eschewing the cliché of his-and-her baths, set them at the center of a light-filled corner room with walls of softly waxed white plaster, a Dutch settee upholstered in antique French homespun and the refined sensuality of a Moorish *hammam*.

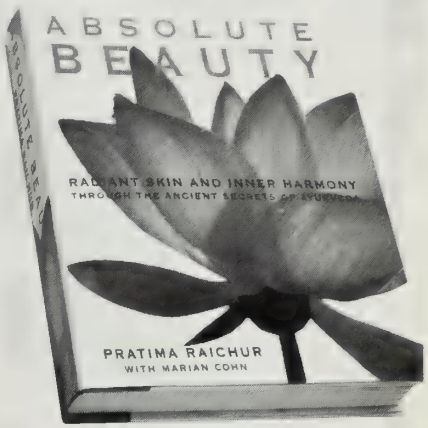
It should be noted that in the late sixteenth century the Low Countries were ruled by Spain. The Spanish colonial influences, the ubiquity of iron and silver, the marriage of sumptuous weavings to severe furnishings—a deliberate tension between the expression of wealth and the rejection of opulence for its own sake—are entirely appropriate to the designers' notion of the Flemish Baroque and to their ambition to "reinvent" it in a lucid and disciplined modern way. The house, in fact, recalls a very handsome recent production, at the Met, of Verdi's *Don Carlo*. The libretto of this court romance has a subversive democratic subtext, and so does this décor. Sills and Huniford have respected Ravazzani's raw modernism by leaving the rooms uncluttered, and that is why—for all their European hauteur—they also feel so New World. Not so far away (at least from the designers' own country house in upstate New York) there are a few surviving colonial Dutch manors of natural stone and wood with a distinctly kindred spirit.

All great châteaus are years in the making, and the Fifields' house took a staggering 1,890 days from the ground breaking to the housewarming. More than a hundred tons of boulders were trucked up the mountain. A small forest of iroko was imported from the Ivory Coast. Two thousand yards of concrete was poured on-site. The hardware order was so large that the company agreed to an unprecedented custom mill run of unlacquered fixtures. The clients gave their design team creative carte blanche—and the team, in turn, gave the clients something more than just its professional services. "Everyone involved was committed to an ideal of perfection," Betsy Fifield says, "and the crew told me that their experience was very emotional—that it was more like an opera than a construction project."

Yet what's most remarkable about the Fifield residence is not how vast or fabulous it is but how little self-indulgent. What might have been a temple of excess—an operatic clash of styles and egos—is an edifice that defers to its landscape and an interior design that sets a benchmark of rational luxury for the millennium. □

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NEW YORK

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two custom-made mohair-covered sofas that face each other at right angles to the fireplace. "I think of the space by the windows as the porch," says Hayes, "and the other as the parlor. The client entertains, but mainly on a small scale, and the different seating areas allow for quiet conversation."

The feeling of intimacy is maintained in the dining room, where an inlaid-ebony octagonal table, attributed to Charles Bevan, is surrounded by two pairs of chairs—one by Godwin and the other by Robert Edis—from the same period. An ingenious pulley lamp, designed by W. A. S. Benson at the turn of the century, can be raised or lowered. The walls, painted a shade of very pale coffee, are the darkest in the apartment.

"All the paint for the project was mixed by the colorist Donald Kaufman," Hayes says. The colors of the walls modulate according to the function of each room. The foyer is dove gray, providing a transition from the cityscape outside to the interior world of the residence; the entrance hall, which in addition to drawings houses examples of African and Native American art and a collection of Greek bronzes, is a warm cream; the living room is a neutral ivory, which presents a backdrop for the larger objects and for human interaction; the bedroom—a personal retreat—is painted cool white. Throughout, the designer chose neutral fabrics and floorcoverings that keep the artwork and furniture center stage.

According to Hayes, the keynotes during the project were juxtapositions—both playful and serious—and flexibility. "The Ad Reinhardt painting, which is dark and small scale, hung for a time over the fireplace. But the large Agnes Martin painting next to it was just dissolving. When we replaced the Reinhardt with a Boucher drawing, the Martin came back to life."

For Thad Hayes, working on this apartment was about deferring to restraint and subtlety, "about not making a statement." For the client, the success of the project—and the pleasure she takes in it—has spurred a reconsideration of her initial plan. Rather than using the apartment for occasional stays, she now finds herself spending more and more time there. □

SONOMA'S H-E RANCH

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tographs of her famous friends in the playroom (Zubin Mehta, Don Johnson, Herb Caen, Cary Grant, Paul Mellon, Philip Johnson, James Beard and Gianfranco Ferré, among others).

Hale has made the master bedroom and guest bedroom wonderfully cozy; one has to tear oneself out of bed. The headboard in the master bedroom was crafted in Florence of beige silk with blue embroidery; the guest bedroom is filled with light and flowers and books. The baths have pewter or gold fixtures. Every bedroom shelf is lined with English wallpaper.

Another cozy and colorful spot is what Hale refers to as the "back porch," which has scores of pots of hydrangeas everywhere. The rattan furniture has cushions upholstered in French floral chintz; the draperies are sailcloth. The nineteenth-century Indian rug was owned by Prentis's parents.

After twenty years of talking about it, the Hales put in a pond that draws ducks and geese and once in a while

> "Prentis had five houses then. I said, 'I don't care if you get rid of four of them. This is the one I love. This should be our home.'"

a crane. Nearby is an octagonal gazebo with a view of the water by day and the stars and sky by night. It is shaded and screened by two giant oaks.

Despite all the man-made beauty and charm, the property is first and foremost a working cattle ranch dedicated to improving the breeds. Hunting and grazing privileges can be obtained by cattlemen and sportsmen.

Denise Hale is and has always been a perfectionist and a detail person, and so was Prentis, and together the haven they created gave them pleasure and happiness all the years of their marriage. Prentis is buried there. Denise will be. Meanwhile, she is the keeper of the flame. □

WASHINGTON FOLK

continued from page 145

soft white. The light fabrics and walls serve as a serene backdrop for the blues in the spongeware and for the blue cupboard that holds the majolica and Mocha ware and several early American storage baskets.

The second stage of the renovation involved repainting the rest of the house. Donald Kaufman, a color consultant, came down from New York to

> Throughout the house, folksiness and elegance combine in arresting ways.

help the couple select the exact shades they wanted. The only room they didn't touch was the upstairs library, which had been painted red by the previous owners. "We'd had a red study in our apartment in New York, so we were used to that," the wife says.

"Usually when you design a room, you start with the walls," Gomez says. "In the case of the master bedroom, though, we already had blue draperies, a blue bed skirt and blue-and-white chairs, so in this case the fabrics came first. To make the blues come alive, I thought of painting the walls with a Donald Kaufman color I call apple green, which I have in my own apartment. The clients saw it there and said, 'We have to have it.'"

In the quarter century that they've worked together, the designer and her clients have developed a relationship that runs deeper than most. "Mariette used to live in a town house in New York," the wife says. "She collected a lot of early American country furniture and folk art and had a drawer filled with wonderful colored napkins and a big basket with her kids' gloves. Everything was cozy and comfy and homey. I like this house because it reminds me of her former house in New York."

"The clients introduced me to the painter Carolyn Brady," Mariette Himes Gomez says. "They have a painting of hers in the dining room of the Washington house; I have one in my New York living room. Over the years we've learned from each other." □


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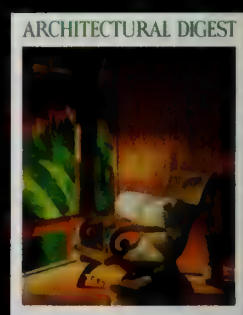
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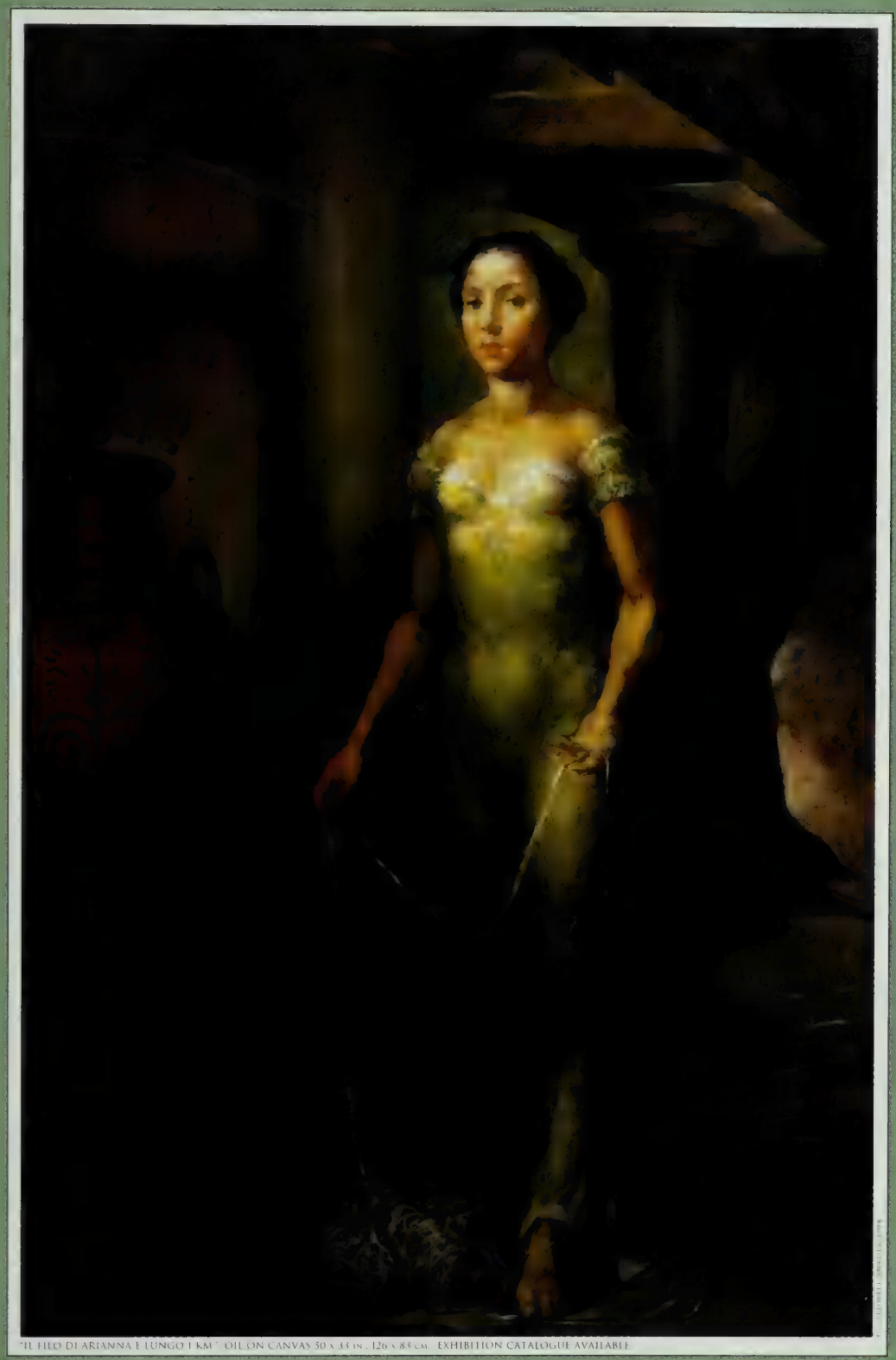
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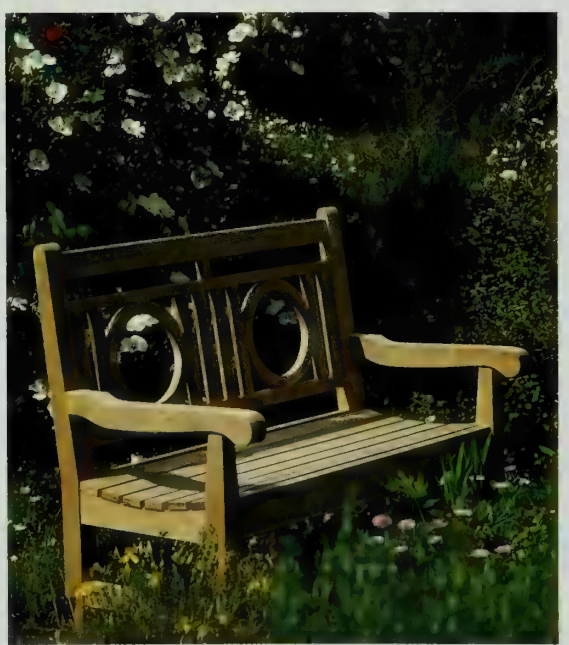
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Les Chenapans Cotton Print on Brittany Sofa,
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FOLLOWING THE MEWS

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London house should be a refuge; it should feel safe. Tranquillity must be a response to what is outside. The serenity that Monika achieved is something I carry with me wherever I go. Whenever I'm in another place and feel any kind of stress, I imagine myself in the gray-green bedroom, put my head on the pillow, and I feel calm again."

Their talk was of colors, of the need for a particular shade of red to wake up the monochromatic tones, and of their shared feeling that color should be part of its surroundings. "In a green English garden, a pool should be green," the client says. "Blue is too jarring. But a pool by the sea should be blue. The colors inside a room should relate to the colors outside. The views from this house are the gray browns of old bricks in the mews houses. The natural linen is that color; the earthy quality of the Chinese pottery is similar."

Furniture came from the client's previous London house; most of the objects have been collected on her travels. "Either I'm a British Airways nightmare or they love me—all that excess bag-

> "A London house should be a refuge; it should feel safe."

gage," she says. "As for tabletops, I tend to create my own mess. It's a necessary part of any house."

The house is finished, but the friendship continues. Monika Apponyi likes to furnish a house to a certain point, then go back a few months later to see things with a bit of distance. "A house finds a great energy when the owner's things are in place," she says. "I like to pick up on that. I come for dinner, and we intend to talk about furniture for the gallery or flowerpots for the balcony, but we talk about everything except decorating. She sends me one of her poems every Christmas, and I treasure them. Most people push too much—they think they can't move in until a house is perfect. But that's only giving a client a show house, a fake image. I'd rather creep into their lives and continue to develop something." □

AMERICAN BEAUTIES

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tury to the 1920s, in the underrated medium Stuart Feld calls "the handwriting of the artist," from a drawing for George Caleb Bingham's *The County Election* to an 1883 graphite drawing for John Singer Sargent's notorious *Madame X.*

In the master bedroom, two charcoals by Lilian Westcott Hale flank the circa 1815 bed. The drawings are perfect there, but vulnerable. "The two of us have an ongoing battle about light," Sue Feld says with a laugh. "Every morning I wake up and automatically open the blinds, and Stuart comes along and closes them. We both try to be careful but not totally compulsive on the subject."

In a more robust medium, five Neoclassical marbles by Hiram Powers, including a rare, full-length *Greek Slave*, are easily accommodated by the first floor's sweeping spaces. Powers's shackled maiden stands framed by swags of yellow-and-green silk hung on an early-nineteenth-century giltwood drapery pole—one of an unlikely set of three discovered by the Felds long before this trio of living room windows came into their life.

The authentic presence of such objects proclaims itself quietly but effectively, as do the period light fixtures in every room. "We're nuts about lighting," Sue Feld admits. "We have almost every kind of lamp used then—like the pair of Argand lamps on the mantelpiece, each with twelve times the lighting power of a single candle. In the early nineteenth century this lamp revolutionized the ability to read or work at night." Dozens of the Felds' other period lamps —many electrified but otherwise untouched—illuminate their surroundings, making ormolu gleam and silver shimmer. "The place simply glows at night," says Sue Feld. "There's no harsh light."

Living with their treasures is a thrill the couple never quite take for granted. "It's an enormously enriching experience," says Stuart Feld. "No matter how many times I look at an object or painting, I still feel the same sense of awe. Collecting is such a potent way of connecting with the past." Not to mention fun. "The question of how to spend free time is a very interesting one," he adds. "Our idea of a good time is to visit thirty antiques dealers on one weekend. This apartment encapsulates our passions, our enthusiasms and all of the fun we've had putting it together." □

AN ITALIAN JEWEL BOX

continued from page 171

separated the living and dining rooms. She then placed the screens facing each other, at opposite ends of the newly unified space, enfolding the whole area in a warm, golden luminescence.

The dining area is defined—but not isolated—by a latticed screen, made and gilded by hand. Visconti is justifiably proud of it but credits the craftsmen, insisting that "here you find talent unequaled anywhere in the world." In her carefully studied system of echoes, there is a sympathetic resonance be-

> Verde Visconti is still charmed by the theater, by its colors and deceits.

tween the caning of the living room's two Anglo-Indian chairs and the gilded screen. A tatami-like sea-grass carpet unifies the entire area, adding more texture and lightening up the space.

In keeping with the intimate scale of the house, the dining room has two small tables; the leather chairs are particularly comfortable and encourage diners to linger over their food and their conversation, which tends to be as cosmopolitan as the furniture.

The sense of refuge is most palpable in the bedroom, where the antique Neapolitan-style bed has been canopied with a handmade silk in soft white and pale turquoise stripes. The white night tables are from India, and a small bronze sculpture on one is by the Italian artist Arturo Martini. The walls are of a delicate straw imported from China, another subtle variation on the Oriental theme that runs through the interior.

Perhaps Visconti's favorite invention for the apartment is the master bath. "The bath was tiny—so tiny that it made me feel physically terrible," she recalls. "Then I decided to do it all up in gold and mirrors, so it would connect visually with the other rooms."

The whole job was done in seven or eight months. "It was largely a matter of furnishing, of decoration," Verde Visconti says. "I was given a free hand, but then the client and I are old friends. I think I had a clear notion of what he wanted." □

TAILOR-MADE

continued from page 177

pageantry ensues as he brings out the hidden chairs."

Upholstered seating, however, is abundant and takes the form of three matched settees covered in a viscose blend. Schaible attributes the gradual emergence of synthetic fabrics in interior design to their use in fashion. "No one looked at these textiles until Prada started showing them," he explains. "Now you see them in houses everywhere." On the floor in the living room, as in the bedroom, the designers used the blackest carpet they could find, which "creates an instant sense of drama, like a black-and-white photo," Bray says. "If you're going to do the black-and-white thing, you might as well take it to the nth degree."

The goal in the bedroom was to make it look as if nothing had happened. Some solutions were mundane, like calculating the size of a bedside table to conceal an unattractive room heater; others were more creative, such as matching the height of the headboard to the backs of the armchairs. "An apartment like this we edit way beyond the point that's healthy," Bray says, throwing up his hands. "That's who we are."

> "If there's a problem, you can't just cover it up with some ivy."

For a man who categorizes his shirts by their thread count, turning a small second bedroom into a dressing room seemed to be an obvious choice. Turnbough curtained the entire room in order to conceal shelves, mirrors, hanging racks, dressing tables with drawers and a television set. "Our client starts his day here," Turnbough notes. "He has coffee, watches the morning news and dresses."

The client and designers alike speak with humor about their shared obsessiveness, and it makes the decidedly extreme seem downright charming. "Lots of people would think this is the driest apartment imaginable," Bray observes. "Our client, by contrast, finds it terribly lush. He's no stranger to the complexity of simplicity." □

VILLAS DELUXE

continued from page 182

your schedule. When I pull into the cobblestone courtyard at 3:00 P.M., I am immediately whisked down a winding stone path to my junior garden villa, one of nine. (Seven larger villas are also behind the hotel and include the Presidential Villa, where Sylvester Stallone and family camped out for seven months last year.)

Familiarity with its guests' lives is something the Peninsula prides itself on. Kasikci calls it "customer intimacy, customizing our services to each guest." Villa habitués can expect to find, upon returning, designer pillowcases and bathrobes monogrammed with their initials and personalized stationery announcing that they are "in residence."

They will also now find jazzier versions of what they've liked all along. "In our original color scheme, we alluded to our fantasy of Beverly Hills interiors of the 1940s—everything saturated in golden hues and warmth, very sunny and California," explains interior designer Darrell Schmitt. "This time we turned up that volume even more," he says, referring to the hotel's gold, buff and peach backgrounds, "adding riskier colors, like aqua and corals, for accent."

In short, an intensity to match that of those who stay there. "When you start up a hotel, you get it done, open the doors and watch it develop a life of its own," says Schmitt, "which is what happened. The hotel acquired its personality by virtue of the people who use it."

A pretty colorful lot, as it turns out. It's a favorite of producers and directors like *Forrest Gump*'s Bob Zemeckis, whom I pass in the lobby one day, and I once interviewed two of the Three Tenors in the Verandah Room. "Peninsula guests are demanding, with real personalities," Schmitt adds. "They don't just walk in and accept the room they get. They want to *influence* their space. We're always moving furniture in and out to suit people."

Happily, the furniture in my villa (with fireplace!) suits me just fine. Especially the bed. The hotel bedspread (my personal bête noire) has disappeared, replaced by a symphony of goose down and crisp white linens. "The bedspread is the most unhygienic thing in a hotel," admits Kasikci. "So we got rid of it and use fine sheets and duvet covers instead. Now, when you walk into the room, the bed looks so good, you want to jump into it."

The Peninsula Beverly Hills is like a small European hotel run by friendly Americans. It delivers all the amenities with none of the attitude. The difference is apparent the moment you walk through the doors into what feels more like a foyer than a lobby. From there, appropriately enough, you enter the Living Room, an arrangement of banana-colored sofas and fireplaces constituting the hotel's social heartbeat.

What the hotel offers, according to the management, is something intangible. "We speak to the sixth sense," says Kasikci. "Another hotel can have a flower arrangement in the lobby or an immaculately dressed doorman. Neither of those is important enough to make you come back. But if I put a bag over your head, drove you around to disorient you and then dropped you off back here, you would sense, without knowing exactly how, that you were in the lobby of the Peninsula."

While CEOs treasure the Peninsula for its efficiency and movie types for its power, for me, it's all about the spa. At the Peninsula you can return from a business trip looking and feeling better than when you left. During my four days and three nights, I opted for daily workouts and nightly massages by firelight in my room. In between I fit in everything I could rationalize—seaweed body buff, facial, almond foot wrap and, of course, a dip in the pool. (Pools are to the West what cocktail lounges are to the East—a place to meet and greet between jangles of your cell phone.)

By the time I checked out (four in the afternoon, no questions asked), I felt like a bona fide participant in the culture of the hotel. I was on a first-name basis with the operator, Cedric, the voice of the Peninsula; Daisy, the doyenne of the fifth-floor spa; James, whose cadre of concierges can arrange anything; Ellis, who kept me in keys; and Anton, who took care of everything they didn't. I had not only aced my work but lost a pound and had the chronic pain in my lower back massaged into submission by Oleg of the Ukraine. I was more ready for reality than I had ever been.

In fact, as I said goodbye to my villa—goodbye to my bed—I realized there was only one problem I had with the hotel: leaving it. □

AD DIRECTORY

A listing of the designers, architects, galleries and hotels featured in this issue

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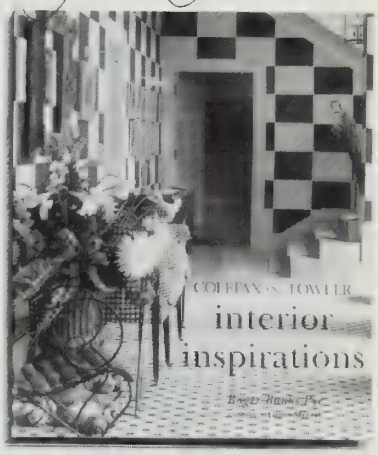
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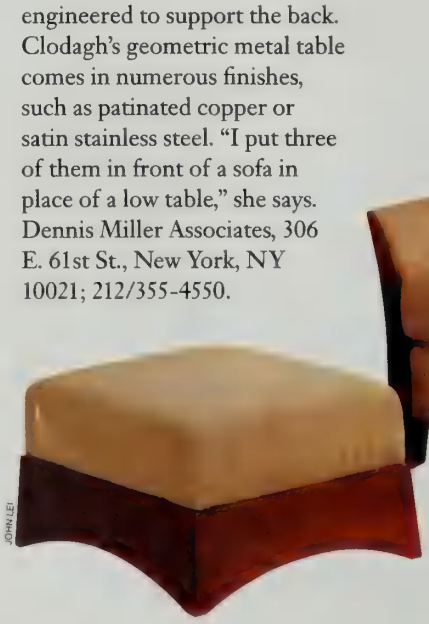
Thomas Beeton knows he's paying more—and waiting longer—for the services of Anthony Kafesjian of **Lloyd's Custom Furniture**, but the results make up for that. Kafesjian builds and upholsters furniture. "He has a couture approach to his work," says Beeton (left, at the shop). "His sense of detailing is reserved. In finishing the corner of a cushion or turning a skirt, he's very subtle. I send him valuable antiques, and he has preserved old hardware, horsehair and finishes. He's an artist." Kafesjian, whose father started the L.A. workshop in 1969, has a big following among designers and furniture purveyors such as Therien. His priority: getting just the right cant on a seat back. Lloyd's Custom Furniture 8550 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069; 310/652-0725.

A CLODAGH COLLECTION

Furniture shouldn't pose questions, like, 'Should I sit down carefully?' or 'Will the surface get easily scratched?' It should be as comforting as a nanny with afternoon tea and scones," says **Clodagh**. So each piece of seating in her new line of furniture at **Dennis Miller Associates** has had to pass what she calls a fluff test: "I stand in front of a sofa and plop down. If I get bruised, it won't pass." The T-shirt sofa, designed for offices and residences, recently passed her test. She's particularly proud of her Edith armchair, named after Edith Wharton, and its companion ottoman, which does double duty as a storage unit. "When you push the ottoman against the chair, it's like a chaise, and it's great to read in because it has lumbar support." The Spa, or dining, chair, a staple in the health spas Clodagh has designed, also is engineered to support the back. Clodagh's geometric metal table comes in numerous finishes, such as patinated copper or satin stainless steel. "I put three of them in front of a sofa in place of a low table," she says. Dennis Miller Associates, 306 E. 61st St., New York, NY 10021; 212/355-4550.



JOHN LEI



JOHN LEI

Clodagh's metal table, left, and Edith armchair at Dennis Miller

continued on page 192



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IN THE CITY OF LIGHT

Where do dealers such as Robert Altman and Bernd Goeckler find antique lighting and porcelain? **Le Onze & Le Douze**, on the rue Jacob in Paris, is one place. Owners Nicolas Sergeeff and Régis Aernouts offer the gamut, from sconces and table lamps to chandeliers and ceiling lights that span the 17th through 20th centuries. "I like the charming and the original. Classic styles don't appeal to me," says Sergeeff. Recently he was showing a pair of 1940s gilt bronze sconces, in the form of two coconuts with three fronds emanating from the center (right), and he also had eight terra-cotta-colored ceramic wall ornaments from the turn of the century. Designers such as **Jacques Grange** and **Jean-Louis Riccardi** might also find interesting ceramic items (below), such as an 80-piece set of Swedish Rörstrand dinnerware made ca. 1850. Le Onze & Le Douze, 11 and 12 rue Jacob, 75006 Paris; 33-1-43-29-42-44.

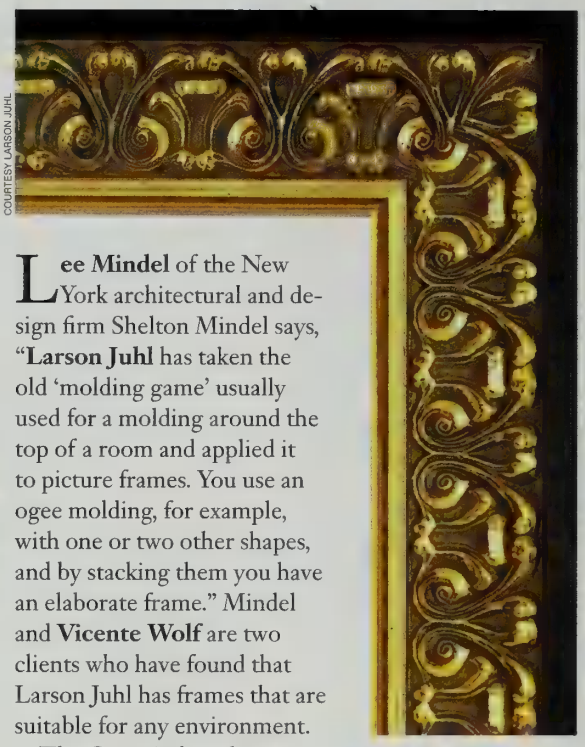


VINCENT KNAPP



VINCENT KNAPP

PICTURE PERFECT



COURTESY LARSON JUHL

Lee Mindel of the New York architectural and design firm Shelton Mindel says, "**Larson Juhl** has taken the old 'molding game' usually used for a molding around the top of a room and applied it to picture frames. You use an ogee molding, for example, with one or two other shapes, and by stacking them you have an elaborate frame." Mindel and **Vicente Wolf** are two clients who have found that Larson Juhl has frames that are suitable for any environment.

The Georgia-based company, owned by Craig Ponzio, who started out as a designer for Larson, has operations worldwide and employs about 3,000 people. Currently the Craig Ponzio Signature Collection includes 14 ensembles of different types of moldings that can be used together or separately. The groups, with names such as Aubusson, El Greco, Vermeer and Musée, contain several moldings or frames. The styles range from neo-Renaissance carving that is water-gilded, in the Musée Collection, to heavy baroque ornamentation and some dark-tone frames in the El Greco group (above), to Vermeer's contemporary shading and starker lines. For showroom locations, call Larson Juhl, 770/279-5200.

URBANE WICKER

A new collection of pieces for **The Wicker Works** with a decidedly cosmopolitan feel is the latest venture for interior designer **Gary Hutton**. "My pieces are slightly different because they're upholstered," explains Hutton, who designed lounge chairs, settees and sofas in both round-back and square-back styles and is planning to add a dining table and set of chairs. The pieces are all made by hand: "It takes two men—two very strong men—to weave the large structural braid, and the back and sides are woven like a basket," he notes. The designer has also produced some unusual combinations, showing samples of the seating covered in leather or a linen-and-cotton velvet (left). "The fact that it's upholstered and we've shown samples in these materials makes it less porchy," he says. "We wanted it to be more urbane." The Wicker Works, 267 Eighth St., San Francisco, CA 94103; 415/626-6730.



COURTESY THE WICKER WORKS

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DATEBOOK

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Rendering of the Trend House Dining Room by Joe Niermann and David Mitchell

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For more information about Wright Plus or membership in The Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio Foundation, please call (708) 848-1976.



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IN THE SHOWROOMS



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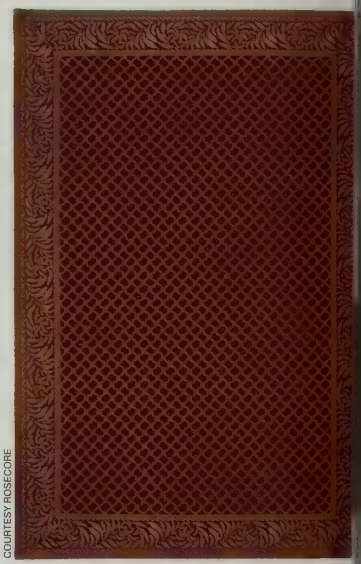
At McGuire, a lounge chair from the new St. Germain Collection

● McGuire

McGuire (415/626-1414) premieres its St. Germain Collection this spring. Named for the Paris faubourg that was home to Jean-Michel Frank's workshop, it includes four woven rattan designs with a 1940s flair. The lounge chair, which has a matching rectangular ottoman with a semiattached cushion, is characterized by a sloping back, and its square, tapered front legs and saber-shaped rear legs are capped with brass sabots. The same details are incorporated into the six-foot sofa. McGuire's three-panel open-weave screen is double-sided so that it can also serve as a room divider.

● Rosecore

Rosecore (212/421-7272) has created a dramatic new showroom in New York's D&D Building for its extensive inventory of Wilton carpets, handmade needlepoint rugs and other floorcoverings that can be woven to order in a variety of sizes. Among the Wiltons is *Le Trelliage* (right), which has a tight diaper pattern of wavy lines contained in a border of stylized leaves; the carpet comes in tan on a cayenne pepper background, blue on cream and several other colors. Rosecore's collection of imported rugs includes *English Tapestry*, a handmade needlepoint characterized by a riot of green and brown foliage with melons and a border of flowers, seed pods and leaves on a camel ground. A handwoven Aubusson called *Floral Art* has a border of multicolored flowers giving way to a beige center containing two baskets overflowing with flowers.



COURTESY ROSECORE

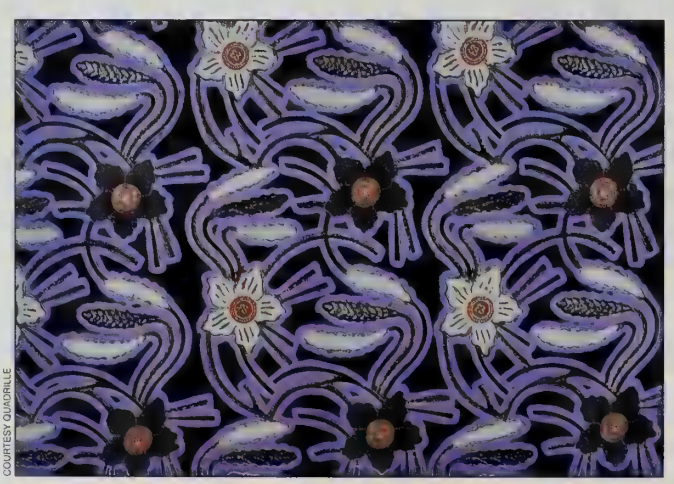
● Cannon/Bullock

Richard Cannon and Richard Bullock have created unusual wallcoverings using handmade Chinese mulberry paper that they sell at their Los Angeles showroom (323/221-9286) and at Donghia (212/935-3713) in New York. The Couture Collection has silk ribbons stitched onto the paper with trailing ends that can be tied into bows or knots or left to fall elegantly.



COURTESY CAMERON CARLETHERIE

Cannon/Bullock's wallpaper with silk ribbons at Donghia



COURTESY QUADRILLE

● Quadrille

New York–based Quadrille (212/753-2995) has bought China Seas, the fabric company that was started in 1972 by Inger McCabe Elliott, who worked as a photographer in Southeast Asia and was inspired by the designs she encountered there. While continuing the traditional China Seas feel with a variety of batik prints, such as *Bunga* (above), a stylized pattern of flowers, seeds and vines, Quadrille also offers several new designs on cotton and cotton-and-silk fabrics. *Tropicana* has large images of peonies done in the fashion of Chinese landscape painting and rendered either in blue on hot pink or pink on yellow; *Nutmeg Tree* shows branches and nutmegs on a white background in a pattern reminiscent of the tree of life; and *Flora* is an abstract pattern of blossoms and leaves in red, blue or peach on tan.

● Nobilis

New to the D&D is Nobilis (212/980-1177), the long-established French fabrics firm, which is showing weaves such as *Scaramouche* (below), a cotton-and-viscose stripe of red and blue scored with a diaper pattern and separated by lines of fringe. Reminiscent of the designs in Commedia dell'Arte costumes are



COURTESY NOBILIS

Arlequin, a silver linen-and-silk weave with red, blue or gold lines forming the diamonds; *Pierrot*, a checkerboard in the same colors; and *Columbine*, a stripe of silver and red, blue or gold. □


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